Tito says things getting worse, revives Edsa I group

Story, Below COL. 2

Texters can help Miss RP win Miss World crown

TXT N TAU LHT!

By Leah Salterio

TEXTERS of the Philippines, unite!

The country's candidate in this year's Miss World beauty pageant, Katherine Anne

TEXTERS/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Doctor claims cloned baby due in January

ROME—A controversial Italian fertility doctor on Tuesday said a woman pregnant with a cloned embryo was due to give birth in January, but he declined to give details about her.

Dr. Severino Antinori told a news conference that the woman was 33 weeks—more than eight months—pregnant with a cloned baby boy and that the

DOCTOR/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, November 28, 2002 ★ 56 pages / 4 sections / vol. 17 / no. 353 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Escaler drops 2 bombshells

Dares Jimenez to allow him to reveal all

YOU CAN NEVER
PUT A GOOD MAN

ERIK AHAZAS

THE BOSS is away for the next 30 days but the employees are not at play but starting a signature campaign and sending fond messages of support.

By Juliet L. Javellana and Michael Ubac

THE MAN who allegedly brokered the $2-million bribe that Rep. Mark Jimenez allegedly gave Justice Secretary Hernando Perez dropped two bombshells last night.

Calling himself "a professional investment and private banker," Ernest L. Escaler virtually cleared Perez and dared Jimenez to give him a written permission to disclose the particulars of whatever transaction he and the lawmaker may have had.

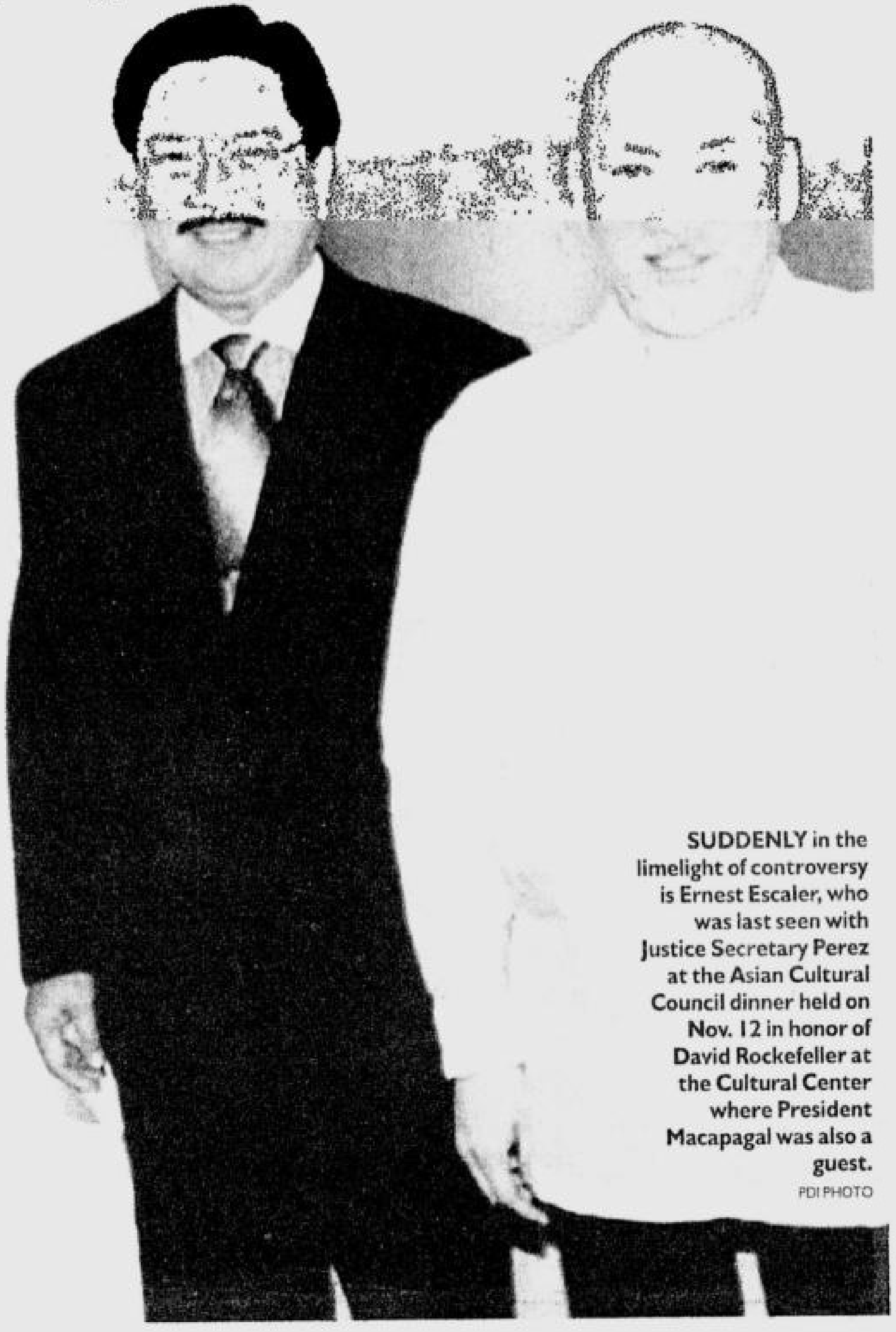
"When Congressman Mark Jimenez gives me his expressed written permission to disclose the particulars of this $2-million transaction, I shall then disclose these particulars," Escaler said in a press statement.

"As a private banker, I am prohibited to reveal the nature or particulars of any account which may have been opened through my services. I do however categorically deny that any of my bank accounts were opened or utilized for and in behalf of Secretary Hernando Perez," Escaler's statement also said.

Jimenez was quick to the draw.

"How can you ask authority from me when you know very well that this is not my account.

ESCALER/ A18



SUDDENLY in the limelight of controversy is Ernest Escaler, who was last seen with Justice Secretary Perez at the Asian Cultural Council dinner held on Nov. 12 in honor of David Rockefeller at the Cultural Center where President Macapagal was also a guest.

PDI PHOTO

Perez to issue power of attorney to Jimenez

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez is willing to issue a special power of attorney to Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez to give the latter blanket authority to withdraw from the alleged Coutts Bank account, where his $2-million bribe was supposedly deposited.

During dinner with INQUIRER senior editors and this reporter Tuesday night, Perez urged the media to focus on the circumstances surrounding the timing of Jimenez's exposé and his motives.

"Why is he talking only now?" said Perez who stressed that the well-planned demolition job started when the Supreme Court canceled Jimenez's P1-million bail in September. Jimenez is facing extradition to the United States.

Conceding that he was already convicted before the bar of public opinion,

PEREZ/ A18

Mark urges Gloria: Open HK bank Account 13706

By Juliet L. Javellana and Cynthia Balana

OPEN the Coutts Bank Account No. 13706—now.

Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez yesterday called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to seek the cooperation of Hong Kong authorities to open the account at Coutts Bank in Hong Kong to prove his accusation that Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez extorted $2 million from him.

Jimenez said that his lawyers, who are already in Hong Kong, were holding original

MARK/ A18

MJ under fire for 'arrogance of wealth'

By Christine O. Avendaño

MANILA Rep. Mark Jimenez, a believed billionaire and supposed victim of a $2-million "extortion," yesterday came under fire for "arrogance and flamboyant display of wealth."

Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice said in a privilege speech that Jimenez had been trying to buy the loyalty of Caloocan residents to influence the mayoralty race there in 2004. He also said he personally witnessed the Manila lawmaker distributing P50,000 checks to colleagues last Christmas.

"His arrogance and flamboyant display of wealth, the source of which we can only suspect, is eating away at this institution," Erice said. "Our people are now beginning to suspect that most of us here are willing pawns of Congressman Jimenez in his fight against the government extradition case."

He urged his colleagues not to allow the "brazen declarations" of Jimenez to "put a stigma on this august body."

Erice said he was to have delivered his speech on Monday but that Jimenez jumped the gun on him with the exposé on Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

MJ/ A4

BENIGNO S. AQUINO JR
"NINOY"

NINOY AT 70
Widow of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., former President Cory Aquino marks the birth anniversary of her husband with a thanksgiving Mass at the Manila Memorial Park attended by family and friends led by President Macapagal. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

'More serious' issues of drug dealing seen

By Michael Lim Ubac and Volt Contreras

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez is "damaged goods" and will no longer be effective at his post, former Solicitor General Frank Chavez said yesterday.

"He has a lot of explaining to do. He can't just resort to general and blanket denials," Chavez said, but added that "deeper and more serious" issues of drug dealing and money laundering were behind the controversy involving Perez and his accuser, Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

Chavez pointed out that Jimenez was "a self-confessed bribe-giver" and had "provided evidence against himself." This was why, Chavez said, the Ombudsman "should waste no time in conducting an investigation."

According to Chavez, Jimenez's attack on Perez's integrity is a double-edged sword. "I would take it as a ploy to block

MORE/ A6

Tito says things getting worse, revives Bandila

By Donna S. Cueto

HAS there been any change after Edsa I and Edsa II?

Only a turn for the worse and a growing sense of despair, according to a coalition of social democrats and cause-oriented groups that took part in the two political events which culminated in the downfall of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Bandila, which helped propel Edsa I and II, yesterday regrouped at Club Filipino in San Juan and called on the Macapagal administration to reaffirm its vision of true people empowerment.

Calling itself Bagong Bandila under the leadership of Vice President Teofisto Guingona once again, the revitalized group expressed dissatisfaction with the country's present state of affairs and urged the people "to protect and carry forward the new democratic order which was won during the February (1986) revolution."

"After two people power uprisings, many of the societal malaise that pushed us to establish the original Bandila still plague our country," the coalition's statement said.

It said Edsa I swept Corazon Aquino to the presidency but installed an "elitist democracy dominated by traditional politicians and the recently ascendant populist politicians."

"(Nearly) two years ago, we were forced to take to the streets again and launch People Power II when elitist democracy produced a corrupt and criminal President. And although we again succeed-

TITO/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and the Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/28/02

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Guingona girding for a fight on MLSA

By Norman Bordadora and Cynthia D. Balana

VICE President Teofisto "Tito" Guingona is willing to be the point man in the fight against the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement.

GUINGONA

Guingona said yesterday he was willing to question the constitutionality of the MLSA before the Supreme Court.

He also said he would testify before the Senate about how the the MLSA should have been ratified by Congress since it contains changes in government policy.

Guingona maintained the provisions in the MLSA were not entirely covered by existing treaties between the Philippines and the United States.

"I'd be happy to debate, I'd be willing to file a case," said the Vice President in response to Foreign Secretary Blas Ople's dare for those opposed to the MLSA to take their case to the Supreme Court.

In a statement yesterday, Ople countered allegations raised by Guingona and others opposed to the MLSA that the agreement could lead the country to war.

"But first things first," Guingona said, "the Senate is already looking into the MLSA and they must answer the questions that have been raised against the agreement."

In a telephone interview, Guingona said that even as an executive agreement, the MLSA still needed to be approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo before it could be implemented.

"If it was an executive agreement, then it must have still been approved by the President and the Cabinet, the President principally," Guingona told the INQUIRER.

Guingona maintained the MLSA entailed basic changes in law and policy not covered by previous agreements. As such, he said, it needed Senate concurrence.

"I hope the Senate will convey this to (those behind the MLSA)," Guingona said.

'Cooperative efforts'

He said the MLSA could drag Filipino troops into a US war with another country under the agreement's Article III Section 1(b). The agreement calls for "cooperative efforts" in and outside Philippine territory.

Yesterday, he questioned another provision, the one contained in paragraph 1 of Article V.

The provision states that "(each party) shall exert its best efforts, consistent with national priorities, to satisfy requests from the other party . . . When an implementing agreement contains a stricter standard form satisfying such requests, it shall apply over this paragraph."

"Does this mean that (voluntary) obligations under the agreement may be transformed into a mandatory commitment?" Guingona asked, in a speech before the congress of the Bagong Bandila group at the Club Filipino.

"What are the stricter standards?" he said.

He stressed the MLSA should have been presented to the people before it was signed.

"Are not the soldiers entitled to know? Do not the citizens have the right to be informed? Unfortunately, the MLSA had been signed before explanations were made," Guingona said.

In his statement, Ople said the MLSA would not commit the Philippines and the US to any conflict or war.

"The decision to got to war is to be made only with the concurrence of Congress," Ople said.

"The MLSA can only come into play in conjunction with an approved activity under the Mutual Defense Treaty, the Visiting Forces Agreement or the Military Assistance Agreement," the foreign secretary said.

In the joint hearing of the Senate committees on foreign relations and defense yesterday, Ople dismissed Guingona's claim that the country would be bound to grant logistics support to the US.

Legal obligation

He said logistics support was only on a "best efforts" basis. He said what the MLSA contains is a legal obligation to observe agreed, common accounting and bureaucratic procedures once the parties agree to provide specific logistics support.

At the Senate, Sen. Manuel Villar, foreign relations committee chair, said the panel may be forced to seek the Supreme Court's intervention should the executive branch insist that the MLSA was not a treaty as some senators had it.

"They (executive officials) still have a lot of explaining to do. We cannot just let them ignore the Senate," he said.

But his co-chairman, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, said there was no need for Senate concurrence since the agreement was not a treaty.

Magsaysay said he was convinced the MLSA was basically a support, supply and services agreement between the two countries' armed forces with mainly administrative, accounting, debit-credit, administrative and logistics aims.

Still, he agreed with Villar that they invite experts on constitutional law and international law to another Senate hearing scheduled next week.

"There is no violation. Let's not be so suspicious of any new arrangement. Let us work on the basis of mutual cooperation, mutual benefit, and the respect that each country has for each other. Meaning, let the good relationship roll," Magsaysay said.

During the hearing, Ople and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes insisted the MLSA was an executive agreement that did not need Senate approval. *With an AP report*

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RP applies for new American funding

WASHINGTON—It seemed like manna from heaven to the world's poorest nations, this promise that the United States would give extra money to countries that clean up their economic and political acts.

Several countries began to shed dysfunction so they could qualify. The Philippines actively courted consideration, stressing its role in the antiterror war. The prime minister of Sri Lanka said he was sure his country would make the cut.

But getting the Millennium Challenge Account off the ground will be a struggle. President George W. Bush is asking Congress to create a new, independent entity to run it, rather than routing it through existing channels at the Department of State.

And the Bush administration has set criteria that could give an edge to the best performers, rather than the neediest, among the world's 79 poorest nations. That means only 10 to 20 countries stand to benefit, and only if Congress allocates the $1.5 billion Bush is seeking in 2004, the first year of the program.

Criteria

In crafting criteria for eligibility, the administration settled on factors such as inflation, overall government efficiency, the amounts spent on health and education, how much it cost to start a new business, immunization rates, trade policy and safeguards on civil liberties.

Top consideration would be given to the fight against corruption. A stellar performance in other categories would not matter if a country fell down in that area, administration officials said.

The nonpartisan Center for Global Development, which researches the impact of wealthy nations' policies on poorer ones, applied criteria similar to the Bush administration's to economic data from 2000, and estimated about 20 countries might meet Millennium Challenge standards.

Of those 20, nine are in sub-Saharan Africa, seven in Asia and four in Latin America.

Question mark

The 20 include Sri Lanka—whose prime minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, emerged from a July meeting with Bush declaring, "Sri Lanka has all the criteria necessary to succeed."

The Philippines, which expressed high hopes of qualifying in September, is a question mark. Its eligibility hinges on where the Bush administration sets the income level, said Steve Radelet, an economic growth expert at the center.

"They will almost certainly score better on these indicators, thereby they can replace some of the lesser performers," Radelet said. "The more likely you allow countries like the Philippines or Thailand, the more likely they are going to bump out countries like Mozambique or Tanzania." *AP*

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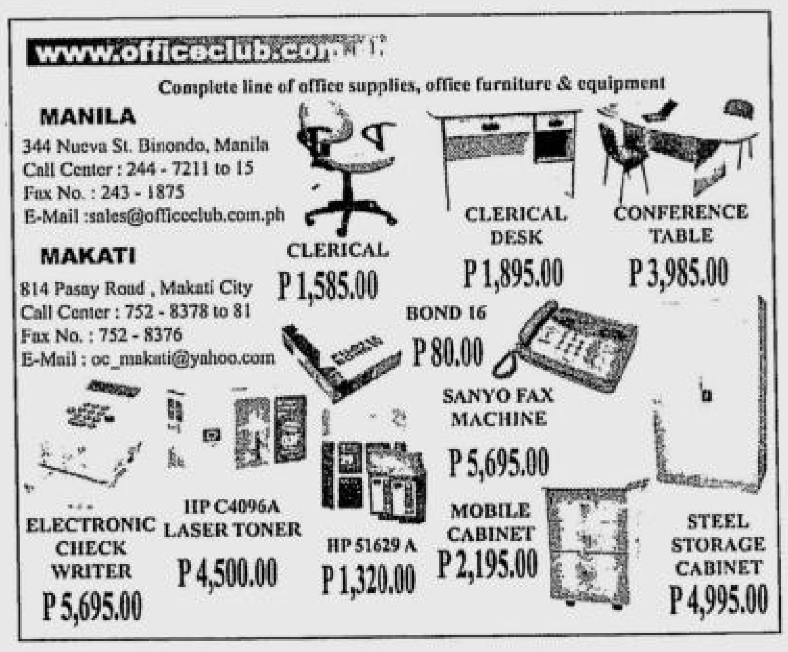

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AFP wants holiday truce on own terms

By Martin P. Marfil

AN "absolute ceasefire" is not what the military wants during the Christmas season. It would rather have a unilateral ceasefire, which would put soldiers on alert to prevent the communists from taking advantage of the holidays.

This was the stand of outgoing Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor, who noted that the communists have destroyed about P54 million worth of properties and collected P15 million in revolutionary "taxes" this year alone.

"Many elements of the New People's Army will take advantage of (an absolute) ceasefire," Defensor said. "They will say we will talk peace, but they will continue their assaults."

The remarks were made during a forum at the Manila Overseas Press Club on Tuesday. Defensor retires today. His post will be taken over by Lt. Gen. Dionisio Santiago.

On Tuesday, Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, said he did not believe a holiday ceasefire was possible, since government did not appear bent on continuing peace talks. Sison also accused the government of violating past ceasefire agreements.

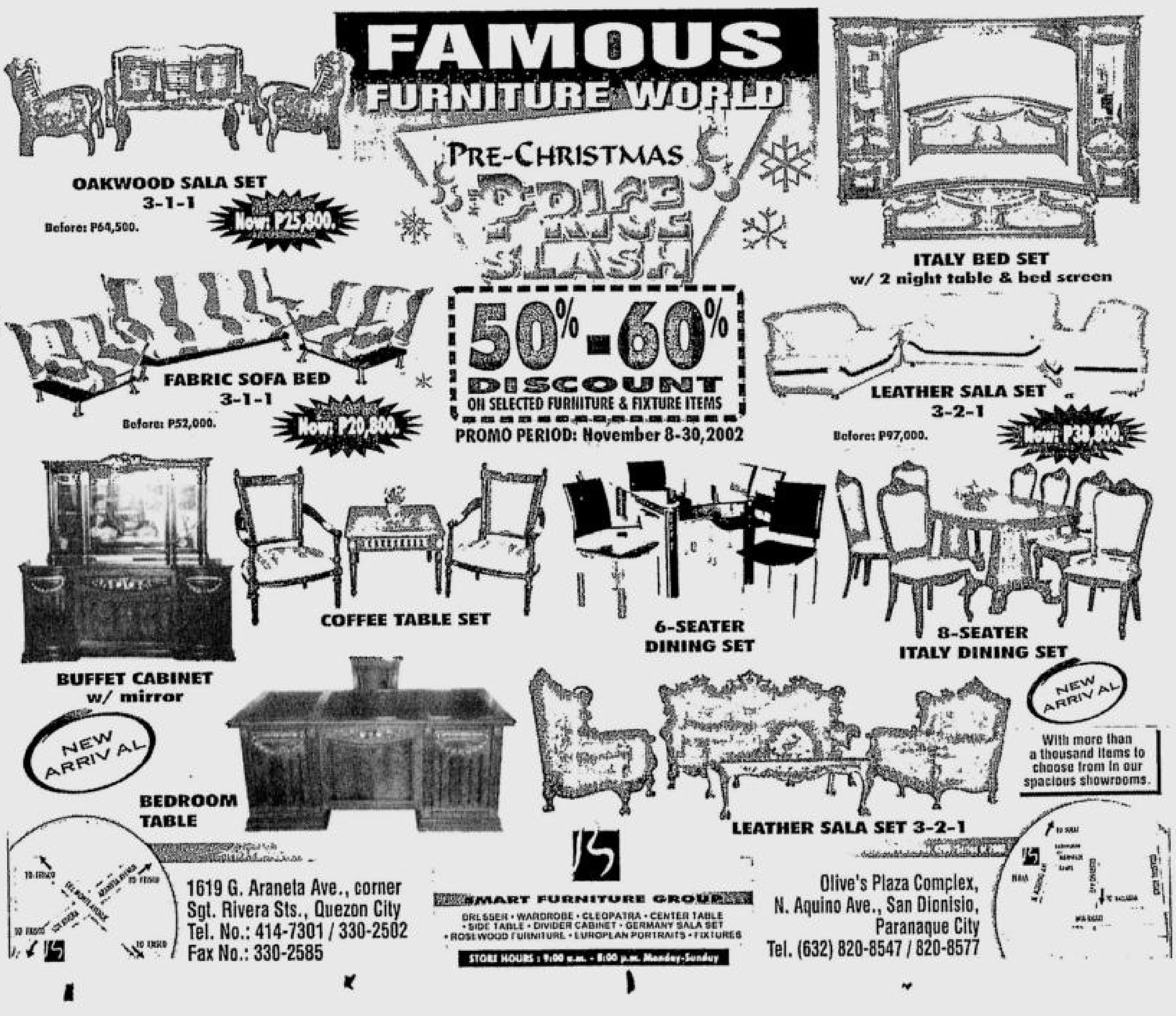
Last year, the communists observed a truce from Dec. 15 to Jan. 6, and government troops rested their guns from Dec. 10 to Jan. 6.

During his 79-day term, Defensor said, the AFP launched offensives through his "Gordian Knot" battle plan that resulted in the capture of a large NPA camp in Northern Luzon.

But he warned of a rebel faction in Mindanao that was determined to "pursue hostilities."

Many members of the Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front wanted to live normal lives, Defensor said, "which is why they signed a ceasefire and opened talks with the government."

But, he said, there was "this other group" that did not seem about to stop its terrorist activities. This group could link up with the Jemaah Islamiah, he said, "or maybe even the al-Qaida."*With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and Agence France Presse*



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Quake hits Mindoro

A MILD earthquake shook a central Philippine island Wednesday but caused no damage or injuries, the government quake monitoring agency said.

The magnitude 4.2 tremor struck at 8:17 a.m. and was centered west of the southern tip of Mindoro island, about 226 km south of Manila, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

The quake was caused by a movement of the Manila Trench, a fault line running along the western part of the main Philippine island of Luzon down to the central Visayas islands. *AP*

3 killed in latest clashes with NPA

TWO communist rebels and a government militiaman have been killed in guerrilla activity in the central Philippines, the military said Wednesday.

A New People's Army gunman was killed and five others were captured following a clash with a military unit on the outskirts of Sorsogon City on Monday, a military report said.

A pro-government militia member attached to the military unit was wounded in the clash, it said.

Another NPA rebel was slain on Tuesday in a fight with the army near Pambujan town on Samar island, while the NPA raided a house and shot dead a militia member near Sta. Cruz town on Marinduque island on Monday, the report said.

Meanwhile, police arrested an NPA rebel extorting money from residents near Malapatan town on the southern island of Mindanao.

The NPA is the 9,000-member armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. It has been placed on the US and European blacklist of "foreign terrorist organizations."

Peace talks between the government and the communists collapsed last year after the NPA assassinated two legislators.

Martin Marfil, AFP

Despite ban, cattle imports from Australia continue

THE PHILIPPINES has not halted live cattle imports from Australia despite banning the importation of beef from that country, after an anthrax outbreak was discovered on a farm in Victoria state, officials said Wednesday.

"All beef imports from Australia are covered," Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor told The Associated Press by telephone yesterday.

But for live cattle imports, Montemayor said, the Philippines has asked Australia to quarantine the animals for 20 days before they are shipped here. Twenty days is the incubation period for the anthrax disease that can kill humans, Montemayor said.

Anthrax

Australian officials said Wednesday they had quarantined a beef farm near Swan Hill in North West Victoria state on Monday after confirming a case of anthrax had killed a 17-month-old Hereford heifer.

The infected carcass was incinerated and remaining cattle on the property were vaccinated. The ranch will remain quarantined for 42 days, with no animals to leave it during this time, Australia's Department of Natural Resources and Environment said.

An animal health official in Victoria, John Galvin, called it "an isolated case that has been quickly contained," and Australian officials told the AP that they advised the Philippines a beef ban was not needed.

"Our embassy is making representations to officials there to emphasize the outbreak represents absolutely no danger to beef exports to the Philippines and there is no quarantine reason why trade should not proceed as normal," said Robyn Bain, chief of staff for Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile.

But Montemayor said he gave verbal instructions to his staff on Tuesday to stop any new beef imports.

Australian beef in transit before the ban was issued could still be sold here, but each shipment would be individually tested for anthrax, said Simeon Amurao, a quarantine official with the Department of Agriculture.

Although the anthrax found in Australia appears to have been isolated, Philippine officials said that since they cannot tell specifically where beef has come from they considered the ban a necessary public health measure.

Temporary

Officials did not immediately say how long the ban would last, though they called it temporary.

Anthrax was the source of a major scare in the United States last year when letters tainted with the bacteria were mailed to a number of prominent officials and resulted in some civilian deaths.

The Philippines on Wednesday banned imports of Australian beef products following the anthrax scare in Victoria state.

Australian beef already in the Philippines will be subjected to laboratory tests to "ensure that the meat is free from anthrax contamination and safe for human consumption."

"We want to assure our countrymen that no anthrax-contaminated beef from Australia has entered the country," Montemayor said.

AP, AFP, Reuters

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After Meralco, group raps rate hike for Maynilad

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

HAVE the Lopezes made a habit of overcharging customers to keep their businesses afloat?

This question was asked yesterday by Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC), a University of the Philippines-based think tank, following a petition by the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc. to raise water rates to P30 per cubic meter, or double the current P15.46.

The Manila Electric Co., another Lopez-controlled company, may also be granted a 30-centavo per kilowatt hour rate hike soon by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), on the insistence of five creditor banks.

If the government regulatory body Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) granted Maynilad's petition, FDC pointed out, an ordinary household consuming about 30 cubic meters of water would have to pay P1,000 a month.

The coalition instead demanded the immediate termination of Maynilad's contract.

Ana Marie Nemenzo, FDC president, said Maynilad Water was also negotiating with Malacañang for a moratorium on its concession obligations for the next five years, or until 2007. She said the firm stopped paying the fees in April 2001.

'Concession fees'

"Since a large bulk of these concession fees are supposed to go to the servicing of debts (that) Maynilad inherited from MWSS, (the appeal) virtually transfers the burden of debt payments back to government's hands," Nemenzo said.

Maynilad's financial troubles are beyond salvation, the FDC insisted, so that a group of creditors led by the Asian Development Bank was disposed to grant the firm's $350-million loan application only if the rate increase was approved.

Wilson Fortaleza, FDC vice president, said Maynilad "miserably failed" to comply with its targets and service obligations.

Neither was the firm able to reduce non-revenue water (NRW), or water lost due to pilferage, leakage and illegal connections, the coalition said. On the contrary, NRW increased to 67 percent, from the 58 percent pre-privatization level.

"It is clear that Maynilad is unfit to manage a water utility," Nemenzo maintained. "(A) bailout of this company is absolutely unjustifiable."

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran lashed out at the five banks urging the ERC to grant Meralco's rate hike petition.

Biggest exposure

Beltran said consumers should not have to pay for Meralco's loans to the Development Bank of the Philippines, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Citibank NA, Equitable PCI Bank and Banco de Oro Universal Bank. He said these banks had the biggest exposure on Meralco's debts totalling P31 billion.

"(We) consumers... have been carrying Meralco on our backs for the longest time," Beltran said, adding that the creditors should run after the firm, and not after its subscribers.

He said the Lopez Group had been using the firm's profits to support other businesses, like the Power Plant mall in Rockwell, Makati, and ABS-CBN television.

"Meralco is far from being in the red," Beltran said, as he challenged the government "to do the right thing for once," by sequestering the utility.

Opposition Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta likewise slammed the ERC for its reported plan to approve a rate hike for Meralco, after the Supreme Court ordered the firm to refund consumers P28 billion in overcharges.

In a statement, Oreta said the ERC wanted to "dupe consumers into believing that they would be paid back... when, in reality, they would be made to (take the money) out of their own pockets in the form of higher (power) rates." *With Ronnel W. Domingo and Rocky Nazareno*

Bomb ingredient seized from Manila warehouse

FIVE people have been detained after chemicals that could be used in bomb-making were found in a warehouse in Manila, police said Wednesday.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group seized a large volume of ammonium nitrate and other chemicals from a businesswoman during an operation Monday night, the police said.

Found were ammonium nitrate contained in 21 boxes and 35 sacks, seven sacks of potassium nitrate, a drum of sodium nitrate, and 1,194 blasting caps in the warehouse of trader Benita Cruz, 54.

Cruz was arrested along with her helpers Allan Agayon, 22; his brother Louie, 18; Juanito Ocampo, 41, and Nomerzano Galalan, 40.

Ammonium nitrate is used mainly as fertilizer, but mixed with other chemicals it could become a powerful bomb, investigators said.

"While it is true these ingredients are primarily intended for agricultural and mining purposes, they could fall into the wrong hands," said Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, CIDG director.

TJ Burgonio, with an AFP report

Aussies shut RP embassy

THE AUSTRALIAN Embassy in Makati City is to be closed indefinitely after it received a security threat, diplomatic sources said Wednesday.

Following the threat, the Australian government will issue a travel advisory informing its citizens "to defer non-essential travel to the Philippines," a source told AFP.

"The embassy will be closed temporarily from tomorrow (Thursday) after it received a credible and specific threat," the source said, declining to give details. *AFP*

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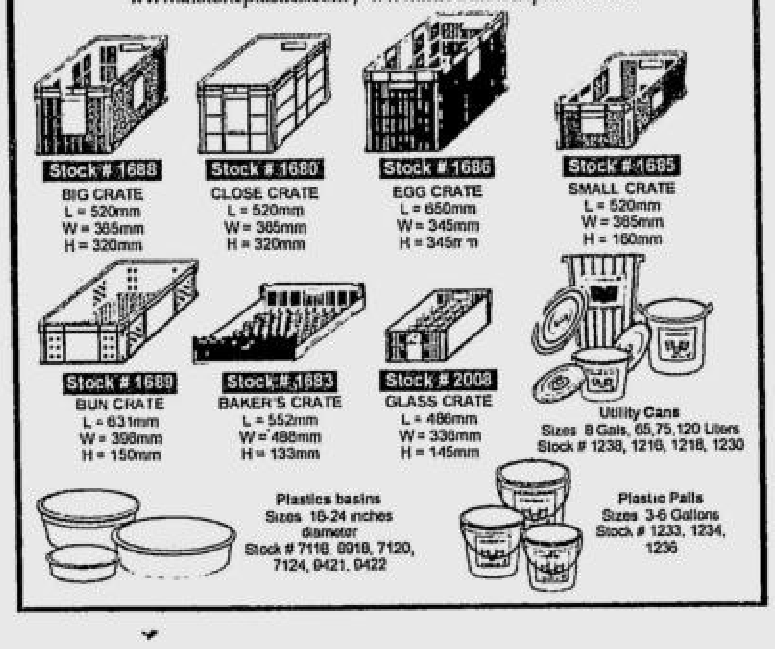

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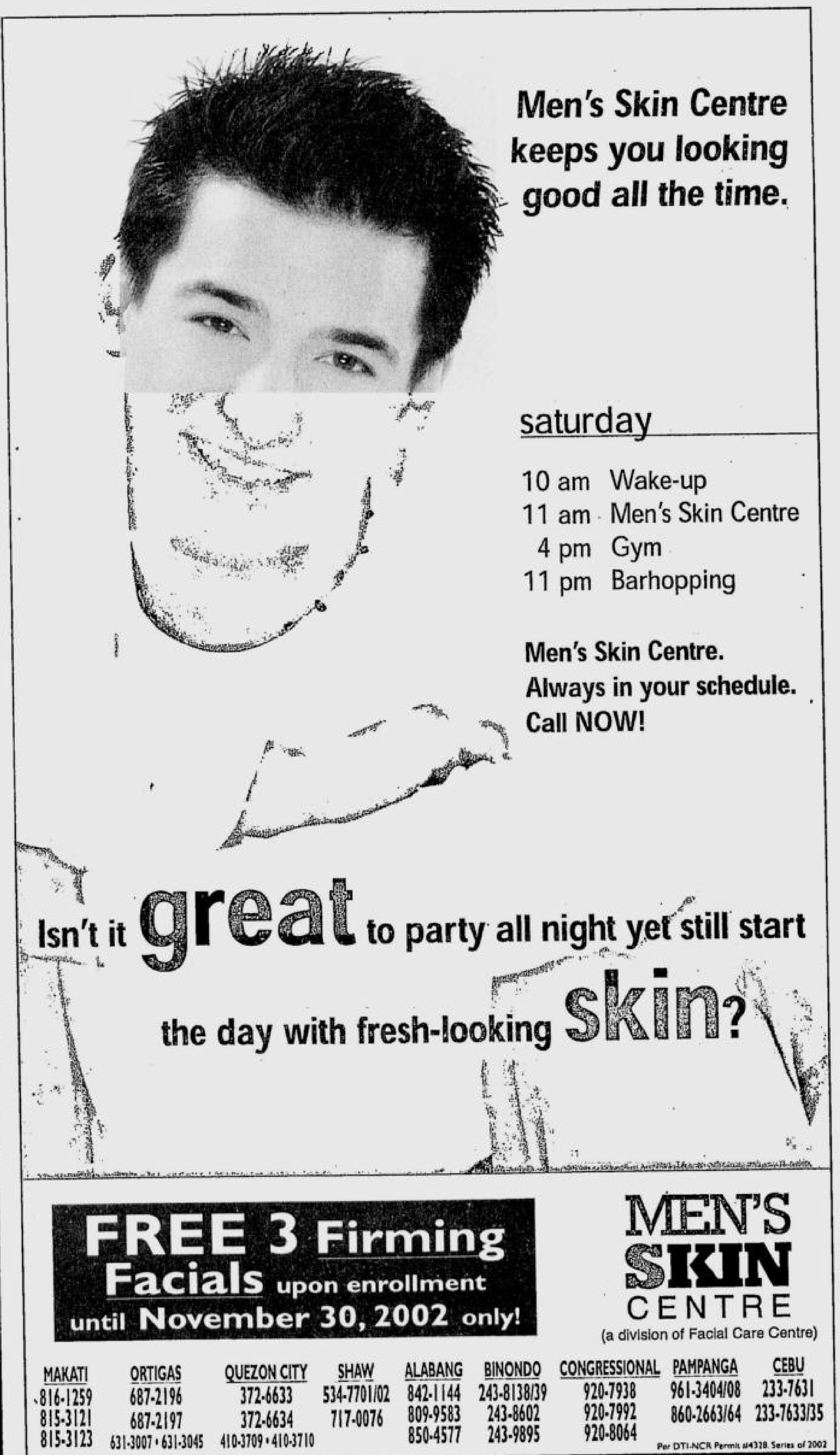
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Texters can help Miss RP

From page A1

Manalo, stands a strong chance to take home the elusive crown.

For the first time in the history of the 52-year-old pageant, the Miss World organizers based in London have decided to include text votes from all over the world as one of the criteria in selecting this year's winner.

The text votes will make up 50 percent of the final vote for Miss World 2002; the other half will come from the votes of the panel of judges.

According to the Miss World website, anybody around the world can have the opportunity to cast his vote for his favorite contestant from his mobile phone. Text votes should be sent from Nov. 18 to midnight of Dec. 6 (London time).

And there is no limit on the number of votes one can send.

Roberto "Bobby" Barreiro, chief executive officer of Audience Impact, a newly formed media outfit that secured the rights to air the Miss World 2002 pageant in Manila, said Filipinos could throw support for Manalo and make her the country's first Miss World winner.

REUTERS

MS Philippines, Katherine Manalo.

"She needs everyone's support," Barreiro told the INQUIRER. "We hope to get as many Filipinos to vote for her by promoting text voting on TV and radio and in print. After all, the Philippines is known as the texting capital of the world."

"We think Filipinos will cheer and stand proud again because of Katherine Manalo and, perhaps even more significantly, because we united as a nation and rallied behind one of our own," Barreiro said.

The closest a Filipino beauty queen came to taking the crown was in 1973 when Evangeline Pascual was chosen as the first runner-up. Ruffa Gutierrez was the second runner-up in the Miss World 1993.

Dennis Mendiola, Chikka Asia Inc. chief executive officer, said his company would enable Filipinos to vote for Manalo through a local number, instead of having to send a more expensive text message to a number in the United Kingdom.

China, Spain, Italy, Germany and France have similar arrangements with the pageant organizers.

To vote for Miss World, text MW <COUNTRY> (example: MW Philippines) and send to 246 for Smart subscribers.

The number for Globe subscribers will be announced soon.

Barreiro's business partner, lawyer Dan Albert de Padua, said the text messages would be forwarded to a UK number through an arrangement with the pageant organizers.

"We believe the Philippines deserves a big gift this Christmas and there is one thing our country hasn't had for quite some time now, an international beauty queen," De Padua said.

"No Filipina has ever won the Miss World crown and 2002 may be our year," he added.

But actress Ruffa Gutierrez ended up as Miss World Second Princess in the 1993 pageant, held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Binibining Pilipinas Charities has also pledged its support for Manalo in getting text votes.

The Miss World pre-pageant will air at 9. p.m. on Dec. 3 on RPN 9. The pageant will air on Dec. 8, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., with a replay from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Manalo is a cum laude mass communications graduate of Assumption College. She took part in a number of volunteer medical and missions prior to winning the Binibining Pilipinas World crown. She won six major awards, including best in swimsuit, during the Binibining Pilipinas pageant.

Manalo works for an international consumer finance company. She plans to pursue a master's degree.

The pageant had to be moved last week to London from Nigeria following deadly riots in the African nation that was sparked by newspaper article that Muslims said blasphemed against the Prophet Mohammed. *With a report from AP*

MJ under fire for 'arrogance of wealth'

From page A1

He said he consulted his colleagues on whether to proceed with his speech "as it may be construed as a defense for Perez," and that they in turn informed Jimenez, who promptly apologized to him.

But Erice went ahead with his speech yesterday because, he said, his "experience" with Jimenez was "very relevant to the controversy of the moment." It was an apparent reference to the Manila lawmaker's charge that Perez had extorted $2 million from him.

"There is something in me that says proceeding with my speech is a matter of responsibility because, seemingly, there is a manipulative scheme being employed by Congressman Jimenez to use this august body as a shield to his many misadventures," Erice said.

With Jimenez flaunting money "before each of us," Erice said, "is he trying to bribe all of us here to serve us a mantle of protection to his travails?"

It was the third straight day that the House, which is rushing to complete plenary deliberations on the proposed national budget for 2003, listened to a privilege speech involving Jimenez. On Monday, Jimenez delivered his exposé on Perez, and on Tuesday, Batangas Rep. Francisco Perez delivered a defense of his father.

Responding to questions from his colleagues, Erice said: "It is my opinion that the institution is being affected by this wanton display of wealth and generosity by a congressman with a pending case before the government."

Erice said Jimenez was interfering with the mayoralty race in Caloocan by asking his supporters to shift loyalty to someone that the latter was apparently supporting.

He said he confronted Jimenez in the first incident involving Tino Bagus, a councilor of Erice's second district of Caloocan, and that they were able to settle matters.

But Jimenez again tried to convince Erice's supporters to shift sides, according to the Caloocan lawmaker.

This was how Erice quoted Jimenez as telling the district's barangay captains in Filipino: "With Erice, you need only pesos. With (Mayor Rey) Malonzo, pesos also.

"(US President Bill) Clinton is chasing after me because he got a taste of my dollars. The same with Erap (ousted President Joseph Estrada). Nani Perez is also chasing after me because he wants more."

The office of Jimenez issued a statement confirming that he had made the remarks, but clarified that these were said in jest.

Christmas gifts

Erice said he also witnessed Jimenez distributing P50,000 checks last Christmas at the House's South Lounge, where the lawmakers dine.

He said he rejected the check offered to him by Jimenez.

Doctor claims cloned …

From page A1

child was developing in an "absolutely healthy" way.

"It's going well. There are no problems," said Antinori, who made world headlines in 1994 when he helped a post-menopausal, 62-year-old Italian woman have a child through fertilization treatment administered at his Rome clinic.

The doctor said ultra-sound scans showed the fetus, which currently weighed 2.5 to 2.7 kg (5.5 to 5.9 pounds), had "more than a 90-percent chance" of being born.

But Antinori, who supports the cloning of human beings as a way for infertile couples to have children, produced no evidence at the news conference to back his claim.

Many in the scientific community have repeatedly dismissed Antiniori's claims in the past about women being pregnant with cloned babies. Experts also doubt he is capable of achieving a cloned pregnancy.

A large number of doctors and scientists reject human cloning as irresponsible, saying the risk of creating deformed or sick babies is too great. They say human cloning also poses unanswerable ethical dilemmas.

Italy is preparing to pass legislation that would impose tough penalties for anyone involved in cloning humans.

Antinori, 57, refused to say categorically if he had any role in the alleged clonings, but he did say he wouldn't be involved in the delivery of the baby.

He said he had given a "cultural and scientific contribution" to a consortium of scientists involved in the pregnancies. He refused to identify the scientists.

During the news conference, Antinori declined to identify the woman who was to give birth in January or give her nationality.

When asked where she was going to give birth, he replied "only in a country where this is permitted."

The gynecologist claimed that two other women were pregnant with cloned embryos—one of them in the 28th week and the other in the 27th. Again, he refused to identify them. He said all three women were "in the same geographical zone."

A RECENT file photo of controversial Italian gynecologist Severino Antinori. AFP

In May, he said three women were pregnant with cloned embryos—one in her 10th week, one in her seventh and one in her sixth. He declined then to say where any of the trio were, disclosing only that one lived in an Islamic nation.

In April, Antinori claimed that he knew of three pregnancies—then in the ninth, seventh and sixth weeks of development—involving cloned babies. He said Tuesday that the oldest of these was about to be born.

Based on his statement in April, however, the longest pregnancy would have passed nine months in mid-November. Antinori would not explain the discrepancy on Tuesday.

An international group of about 20 specialists, including Antinori and American doctor Panos Zavos, announced in January of last year that they intended to clone a human being in order to help sterile couples have children.

Antinori said Tuesday that he no longer had contact with Zavos.

Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters

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'Mashers' days are ended on LRT

HAPPY days have ended for perverts on the rush-hour train.

Starting next week, the Light Railway Transit Authority will assign one coach per trip strictly "for female passengers only," to protect them against sexual harassment.

LRTA administrator Teddy Cruz told the Agence France Press that the scheme was approved after officials received complaints of "male passengers who deliberately squeeze their way into fully loaded trains to make sexual advances."

Female commuters on the railway that runs from Baclaran to Monumento via Taft Avenue have long put up with "mashers" and other petty sex offenders, over and above watching out for pickpockets, especially on the early morning, noontime and early evening trips.

There didn't seem to be as big a problem on the Metro Rail Transit, the train line which services Edsa, observers noted.

"To avoid confusion (and ensure compliance)," Cruz said, "security guards on the platforms will guide passengers who want to use the all-female coach." *AFP*

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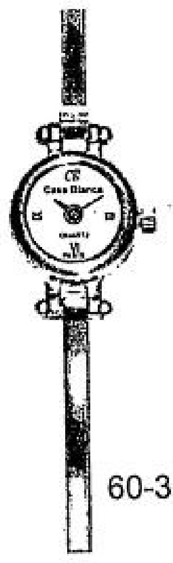
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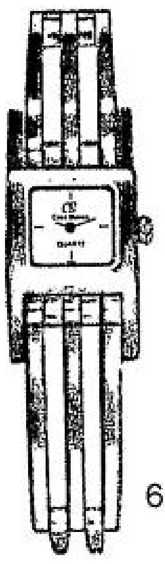
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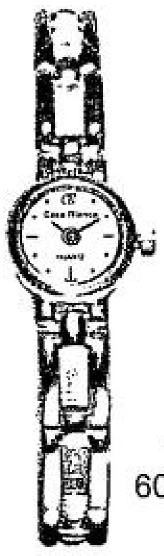
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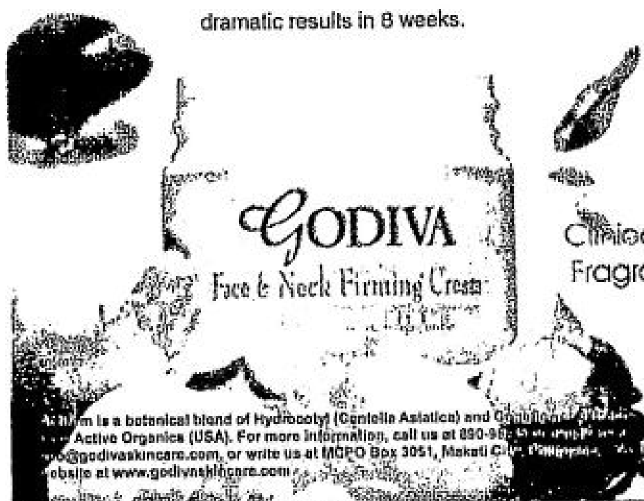

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Ombudsman assures objective investigation

OMBUDSMAN Simeon Marcelo last night assured the House that he would objectively investigate Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez's accusation of extortion against Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez.

The assurance was made during deliberations on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman for next year. Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, a vocal supporter of Jimenez, elicited it from Marcelo through Bataan Rep. Antonino Roman, who had been assigned to defend the budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies that include the Office of the Ombudsman.

"Will he (Marcelo) do his best to conduct the investigation objectively even if he is close to Nani Perez?" was how Dilangalen sought the assurance.

Roman, speaking for Marcelo who stood by his side, said the Ombudsman would do so.

Earlier during the deliberations, Dilangalen had noted the close professional relationship between Marcelo and Perez that included their working together as prosecutors at the impeachment trial of then President Joseph Estrada.

The Maguindanao representative had also sought Marcelo's inhibition from the investigation of Jimenez's accusation against Perez because of these close ties, but Roman said the Ombudsman could not comply with that. *Christine O. Avendaño*

'More serious' issues of drug dealing seen

From page A1

extradition," he said of the lawmaker who is wanted in the United States.

"The real reason for bringing him back to the United States is not mail fraud, not illegal campaign contributions. It is something deeper and more serious (such as his) reported knowledge of drug dealing and money laundering in his area of business operations in Latin America," Chavez said, and confirmed earlier rumors that Jimenez would be slapped with stronger charges when on US soil.

Chavez, however, expressed the belief that Jimenez was engaged in a legitimate computer business in South America.

"But in doing business and (making money) in an economy run by drugs, you get tainted," he said.

He likened the situation to sleeping with an HIV-positive partner: "In the long run, you get AIDS."

Jimenez, Mario Crespo in real life, served as adviser on Latin American affairs to then President Joseph Estrada.

But in Estrada's opinion, the man whom he once hailed as a "corporate genius" is hiding the real reason for the $2 million that Perez supposedly received.

"(Jimenez) will not say that it's for the government's approval of the Impsa contract because it will become a case of bribery, not extortion, and *sabit din siya doon* (he'll also be liable for that)," the ousted President told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday. "He has to go around and claim it was extortion."

Estrada also said he had reason to believe that the money was the payoff for the approval of the energy contract between the government and the Argentine firm Impsa because Jimenez, who had been brokering the deal, also offered him a P14-million bribe when he was still president, which he "did not entertain."

ESTRADA: Jimenez hiding real reason for $2M.

CHAVEZ: Perez is damaged goods

"Of course he will deny that today," said Estrada, detained for almost 20 months now on charges of economic plunder.

Technically correct

On Perez's claim that the burden of proving the supposed bribery rested on his accuser, Chavez said: "Technically, yes, (because) he's talking as a lawyer. He's correct. (But) in terms of public perception, he has the burden because he is the secretary of justice."

Perez is "damaged goods already," Chavez said. "He will cease to be effective as secretary."

He is also entitled to due process, "but as long he sits there and the (officer in charge of the Department of Justice) is his choice, there is that apprehension that people who will participate in the investigation will be under his influence, direction and control," Chavez added.

At a dinner with INQUIRER editors and reporters Tuesday night, Perez admitted that US authorities had paid special attention to Jimenez's extradition case.

"More than anybody (else) who is facing possible extradition, US officials want (Jimenez)," he said, adding that the US government was preparing stronger cases against the congressman.

Perez has ordered Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation to trace the alleged $2-million deposit at Coutts Bank in Hong Kong.

But there are too many verifiable facts against Perez that "cannot just be glossed over," Chavez said.

He said these were the number of the Coutts Bank account, the role of Ernest Escaler, the motivation for putting the supposed squeeze on Jimenez and the certification issued by Coutts Bank denying any account in the name of Perez or his brother-in-law, Ramon Arceo Jr.

"At this point the certification has no probative value because it has not been duly authenticated and identified before the proper forum. Why should Coutts Bank bother to even issue a negative certification?" Chavez said.

He said Coutts Bank officials could not be constrained to reply to the query letters sent by both Perez and Arceo, whom he described as an "expert in banking laws."

"They don't normally do that," he said. "In the first place, a denial or an admission is an implied violation of the bank secrecy law because it means that they looked into the request and into their accounts."

Noting that Coutts Bank is a subsidiary of a Swiss bank, Chavez said: "Swiss banks have been known to deny the existence of illegal deposits in their vaults. They will always protect their business and their clients."

Chavez said the NBI should "definitely" go after the paper trail of the supposed bribe money.

"If the NBI took extra efforts to investigate Sen. Panfilo Lacson (for money laundering), there is no reason it should make Perez an exception simply because he is DOJ head," Chavez said.

Hiding something

As for Jimenez, Chavez said the lawmaker "abused" the privilege speech in attacking Perez earlier this week.

"And his reaction to interpellation betrays a mind that is hiding something," Chavez said. "He utilized family as an emotional instrument to gain public sympathy. He has to come up with hard facts and solid evidence.

"He is just too emotional. This obfuscates reason and logic."

According to Chavez, the lawmaker has to address three vital issues: the 27 checks allegedly issued to then President Estrada; the origin of the money; and the reason for the supposed $2-million bribe to Perez.

"Mr. Jimenez is playing a gambit," Chavez noted. "But this would be his last attempt to maintain freedom."

Estrada said the "circumstances" of the alleged payoff to Perez showed that it could not possibly be linked to Jimenez's extradition case or to supposed government pressure on potential state witnesses against the ousted President.

For example, he said, the two men's meetings at Jimenez's Forbes Park home took place when the Macapagal administration was just a few days in power and could not possibly be concerned with Jimenez's status vis-à-vis the US government.

The issue was still pending before the Supreme Court at the time, and "still too far off" to be a talking point between Jimenez and Perez, he said.

On Jimenez's claim that Perez was pressuring him to turn state witness against Estrada in the plunder case, the deposed President said he started to receive "reports of harassment" from his allies and appointees only around April last year when the Ombudsman filed charges against him at the Sandiganbayan.

"The reports of harassment would come much later, when I was already detained," he said.

Estrada's political lieutenant, Jesus Crispin Remulla, affirmed that Jimenez had offered $14 million to the ousted President in exchange for the approval of the Impsa contract.

He said the amount represented 5 percent of the contract's total cost of $280 million.

Asked why the Estrada camp was disclosing this only now, Remulla said it was also only now that Jimenez made his exposé on Perez.

"We're just telling what we know," he said. "'Why would we defend (Jimenez)?"

'Both extortionists'

As far as the militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya is concerned, the controversy is a "war of extortionists."

"One is extorting money to get rich, and the other is extorting commitment to prevent his extradition to the United States for charges of crimes of corruption," Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap said.

Hicap expressed the belief that the Perez-Jimenez showdown was meant to cover up the supposed $14-million payoff for the Impsa deal.

He said that Jimenez might have an agenda in going after Perez but that this had shifted the focus from the alleged payoff, which "may find its logical conclusion in the Office of the President." *With a report from Gerald G. Lacuarta*

BANDILA is up again with Vice President Guingona leading its revival at a formal convention on Wednesday in Greenhills, San Juan. DENNIS SABANGAN

Tito says things getting worse, revives Bandila

From page A1

ed him, the system that produced such a President and the structure and culture of corruption remain with us," the statement added.

Democratic institutions that have been put in place, according to the statement, remained "largely insensitive to the public pulse."

"There is thus a growing sense of drift and despair," it said.

Guingona

In his speech at the coalition's convention, Guingona said: "Yes, it seems that the more things change, the more they remain the same. As in our case, things seem to have worsened."

Guingona, who resigned as foreign secretary over policy differences with President Macapagal-Arroyo, echoed the coalition's concerns over widespread corruption and disturbing signs of a new cronyism.

"I also sense that the complacency that comes with good connections is growing," he said. "Let us reverse this by putting ourselves in war footing again. There are many key struggles ahead."

Bagong Bandila also held its first election of officers. Guingona was voted chair of the council of advisers; Ramon Jabar, president; Philip Suzara, executive vice president; Teddy Lopez, secretary general; and Bayani Hipol, treasurer.

Roy Oliveros, Chito Generoso, Fil Joson, Myrna Gojar, Fr. Robert Reyes and Gerry Bulatao were elected to the council.

Heading the coalition's five commissions are Chito Gascon for human rights, peace and democracy; Merlin Magallona for national sovereignty and international affairs; Sixto Roxas for people-empowered governance; Ed Rancio for social concerns; and Ricardo Nepomuceno for public accountability.

1987 statement

During the convention, Bagong Bandila redistributed the original group's Aug. 21, 1987 statement, "The State of the Vision," issued on the occasion of the fourth death anniversary of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

The sentiments and observations expressed in the statement, including Ninoy's vision that the Filipino was worth dying, remained valid today, according to the group.

"True, we have erected the framework of a democratic government. We have ratified a Constitution that enshrines much of the people's aspirations for sociopolitical and economic democracy," the 1987 statement said.

"We have fashioned the shell of a people's democracy. But what of its substance? How equal is our democracy? How participative is the process of governance?

"Because (of) repeated failure to adequately consult the people in the formulation of sensitive national policies, there is a growing reception of the creeping ascendancy, once again, of an isolated technocracy in government."

Bagong Bandila then asked the rhetorical question on Wednesday: *"May nagbago ba* (Has there been any change?)"

People power

But Suzara, chair of Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas, clarified that the organization at this point did not see any need to launch another people power.

"We all subscribe to democratic processes. The democratic systems are still in place. I don't think there's a need for that (another people power)," he told the INQUIRER.

Suzara said the coalition, with its key personalities both inside and outside government, had the responsibility "to stave off an economic crisis."

He said President Macapagal should consider Bagong Bandila as a "partner," not as an adversary.

Suzara said the coalition had to tell her administration what was wrong so it could correct itself early on.

"That's the way to have a healthy government," Suzara said. "This group can serve as a mirror (of the Macapagal administration). It is a potentially powerful ally to the President."

Bagong Bandila, however, did not want to be likened to the Council on Philippine Affairs, a motley group of personalities, that also helped install Ms Macapagal to power but later drifted away—disillusioned with her administration.

"There's a difference," Suzara said, without elaborating.

In its statement, Bagong Bandila said it would retain its nature as "a political movement . . . a progressive alliance of liberal democrats, Christian democrats, social democrats and other democratic forces."

Its aim: "To preserve and enhance the gains of both People Power 1 and 2, and build upon it to achieve social transformation that Bandila envisions."

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

EN BANC

RESOLUTION

AMENDMENT ON THE CLARIFICATION ON THE LEGAL FEES TO BE COLLECTED IN CASES OF CORPORATE REHABILITATION AS PROVIDED IN A.M. NO. 00-8-10-SC

WHEREAS, in a Resolution issued by this Court on 04 September 2001, entitled "Clarification On The Legal Fees To Be Collected And The Applicable Period Of Appeal In Cases Formerly Cognizable By The Securities And Exchange Commission," it is provided that petitions for rehabilitation of corporations should be considered as a special proceeding and the amount of filing fees should be assessed in accordance with Section 7(d), Rule 141 of the Revised Rules of Court; and

WHEREAS, in order not to heavily burden corporations applying for rehabilitation, a more equitable schedule of legal fees is desirable.

WHEREFORE, the Court has resolved to adopt a new schedule of filing fees; *viz*:

1. **Rates of Filing Fee. –**

For initiating special proceedings for rehabilitation under the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation, the fees payable shall be collected in accordance with the value of the assets of, or amount of monetary claims against, the debtor, whichever is lower, which must be declared in the Petition, as follows:

1.1.	Less than P10,000,000.00	10,000.00
1.2.	P10,000,000.00 or more but less than P20,000,000.00	20,000.00
1.3.	P20,000,000.00 or more but less than P30,000,000.00	30,000.00
1.4.	P30,000,000.00 or more but less than P40,000,000.00	40,000.00
1.5.	P40,000,000.00 or more but less than P50,000,000.00	50,000.00
1.6	P50,000,000.00 or more but less than P60,000,000.00	60,000.00
1.7	P60,000,000.00 or more but less than P70,000,000.00	70,000.00
1.8.	P70,000,000.00 or more but less than P80,000,000.00	80,000.00
1.9	P80,000,000.00 or more but less than P90,000,000.00	90,000.00
1.10.	P90,000,000.00 or more but less than P100,000,000.00	100,000.00
1.11.	For each P10,000.00 in excess of P100,000,000.00	10.00

2. **Manner of Payment. –**

2.1. Fees amounting to P100,000.00 or less shall be paid upon the filing of the petition.

2.2. Fees in excess of P100,000.00 may be paid on staggered basis as follows:
- 2.2.1. P100,000.00 shall be paid upon filing of the petition;
- 2.2.2. The balance shall be paid in accordance with the following schedule:
  - 2.2.2.1. 25% shall be paid upon the issuance of an order giving due course to the petition.
  - 2.2.2.2. 25% shall be paid upon approval of the Rehabilitation Plan; and
  - 2.2.2.3. The balance of 50% shall be included as part of the preferred payables to be settled in the Rehabilitation Plan.

A.M. No. 00-8-10-56, entitled "Clarification On The Legal Fees To Be Collected And The Applicable Period Of Appeal In Cases Formerly Cognizable By The Securities And Exchange Commission," is hereby modified accordingly.

This Resolution shall take effect on December 10, 2002, and it shall be published in two (2) newspapers of general circulation not later than November 25, 2002.

HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR.
Chief Justice

JOSUE N. BELLOSILLO
Associate Justice

REYNATO S. PUNO
Associate Justice

JOSE C. VITUG
Associate Justice

VICENTE V. MENDOZA
Associate Justice

ARTEMIO V. PANGANIBAN
Associate Justice

LEONARDO A. QUISUMBING
Associate Justice

CONSUELO YNARES-SANTIAGO
Associate Justice

ANGELINA SANDOVAL-GUTIERREZ
Associate Justice

ANTONIO T. CARPIO
Associate Justice

MA. ALICIA AUSTRIA-MARTINEZ
Associate Justice

RENATO C. CORONA
Associate Justice

CONCHITA C. MORALES
Associate Justice

ROMEO J. CALLEJO, SR.
Associate Justice

ADOLFO S. AZCUNA
Associate Justice

More terrorists trained in RP, report says

UP TO 3,000 members of Islamic groups across Southeast Asia were sent for terrorist training to the Philippines and Afghanistan, according to a study widely reported in Sydney.

United States-based Prof. Zachary Abuza, who prepared the document, said "many more radical Muslims than previously realized" have been trained and sent home to Southeast Asian countries to set up sleeper terrorist cells.

Abuza's report, "Tentacles of Terror—al-Qaida's Southeast Asian Network," said most of the radicals had committed themselves to jihad, or religious war, in their home countries, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The report, quoted extensively by The Australian newspaper and ABC radio, said ties formed nine years ago between the regional Islamic network Jemaah Islamiah (JI) based in Indonesia and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida were now being identified "at an alarming rate."

JI, recently outlawed, has been blamed for the Oct. 12 Bali bombing in which more than 180 people, almost half of them Australians, were killed.

Abuza, from Boston's Simmons College, was convinced Bin Laden saw Southeast Asia as a region of great potential for recruitment and fomenting Islamic revolution. He recently told ABC radio that the region now harbored 1,000 potential terrorists trained in the Philippines and Afghanistan.

But while he noted that the stepped-up war on terrorism had eliminated many of the training camps, he said "a number" of Southeast Asian countries still had weak governments, corrupt bureaucracies, porous borders, access to arms markets, and problems in identity theft and money laundering. He said these conditions definitely gave terrorists space to operate.

According to the report, bin Laden had also identified Indonesia, owing to its political instability, as a "new frontier," a vulnerable link in the region. *AFP*

Palace OKs SUVs for Landbank officials

A BALLOONING budget deficit notwithstanding, Malacañang has approved a plan of Land Bank of the Philippines officials to buy 21 top-of-the-line brand new cars, including four sport utility vehicles (SUVs), costing millions.

A source said the Palace gave the go-ahead despite the fact that the goverment bank had at its disposal enough cars acquired from debtors.

The INQUIRER yesterday got hold of documents confirming Malacañang's approval, although these did not mention the SUVs.

According to the documents, Landbank requested late last year for one sedan/hatchback with an engine displacement of 2200 cc for gasoline fuel and 3000 cc for diesel, and 20 others with a displacement of 1500 cc for gasoline and 2200 cc for diesel.

A Honda—the bank's apparent brand of choice for the sedans—Accord (2000 cc gasoline) costs P1.36 million, and a Honda Civic (1500 cc gasoline), P718,000.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo informed LBP president Margarito Teves in writing that President Macapagal-Arroyo had approved the request on Feb. 19. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Camacho targets VAT exemptions

AS if his recent bruising encounter with the Lopez family of the Manila Electric Co. had not hurt him enough, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho is gearing for a fight with movie industry denizens as well as the medical and legal professions.

At a loss on how to check the country's runaway budget deficit, Camacho is asking Congress to lift the exemption of actors, lawyers, doctors, professional athletes and others from paying the 10 percent VAT.

Camacho estimated that the government loses up to P8.6 billion in annual revenues from the VAT exemption given to these professionals.

"Such exemptions will tend to further erode the revenue base at a time when we are having difficulties," he said.

The finance chief explained he was hard-pressed to find ways to plug revenue leaks and collecting more taxes from professionals should be one of them.

The government has been treating the professionals with kid gloves and it was about time these people contributed more to nation-building, he said. *Clarissa Batino*

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What if the tariff structure IS RATIONALIZED?

No more FEARS!

IN ANOTHER full-page ad published recently in major newspapers by four plastics associations, among others, the issue of tariff distortion has once again been raised to highlight the need to urgently address its resolution. If the country is to move towards a stronger industrial environment, it is indeed imperative that the distortion is rectified and the tariff structure is rationalized. The distortion exists only in the AFTA-CEPT scheme and solutions exist to allow correction as well as relief should injury from import surges from ASEAN countries be proven. The current MFN structure has no distortion but can definitely stand improvement to make industry stronger. The premises that should guide the corrective actions should therefore be well understood in order to arrive at a rational tariff structure for the petrochemical and plastics industries.

It has been claimed that "high tariff on plastic industry's raw materials and finished products (sic)" allegedly "has seriously undermined the competitiveness" of the plastics industry, and a lot of other industries. The truth is Philippine tariffs on imported resins and polymers have never been high especially from the time the new petrochemical midstream plants came onstream. The five-year old polymer sector has never enjoyed the 40% tariffs that the plastics industry enjoyed for decades. The Philippine resin tariff structure is in fact the lowest compared to our other Asean competitors. (Please see table.)

Historical ASEAN Petrochemical Tariffs

	86-'92	'93-'94	'95-'96	'97	'98	'99-'01
Malaysia	-	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
Indonesia	-	40%	40%	40%	35%	20%
Thailand	40%	40%	30%	21.75%	21.75%	20%
Philippines	-	20%	20%	10%	10%	15%

Malaysia maintained a 30% tariff on petrochemicals from 1993 till last year. Thailand and Indonesia imposed as high as 40% from 1993, and lowered it only to 20% last year. Despite the fact that the Board of Investments Master Plan for the petrochemical industry recommended the maintenance of a 20% tariff on petrochemicals, the Philippines ironically slashed the tariffs from 20% to 10% in 1997 just when the newly established midstream petrochemical industry was about to commence operations, and adjusted it only later to the current 15%.

What undermines the competitiveness of both the petrochemical and plastics industries, and other downstream industries for that matter, is the unilateral and accelerated tariff reduction program covering MFN rates and the existing distortion in AFTA-CEPT rates. These are the problems that need to be addressed.

Blaming the alleged "high tariffs" on resins and polymers for the "migration of consumer product manufacturing from the Philippines to Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand" is a statement devoid of evidence. Tariffs on resins used in the manufacture of plastics based packaging materials were never the reason for the alleged "migration of consumer product manufacturing from the Philippines." For why should they transfer to countries like Malaysia and Thailand where MFN tariffs on resins are even higher and where the governments have prescribed non-tariff barriers to the entry of foreign resin!

THERE IS NEED TO CONFRONT THE VERY ROOT OF INDUSTRY'S PROBLEMS. The distortion in AFTA-CEPT that causes injury to the plastics industry should be corrected by petitioning for the upward adjustment of downstream tariff rates from 3%-5% to 15%-20% – and not by advocating for the demise of the P50-billion midstream petrochemical industry, which has been operating for barely five years. On the other hand, industry stakeholders should close ranks in order to rationalize the MFN tariff structure from the upstream all the way to consumer product manufactures. ***There is no international trade obligation that prevents us from doing so!***

It is wrong to believe that the plastics sector can stand alone in the face of global competition. Competing foreign products will be coming from countries that have their own petrochemical industry, have cheaper power, fuel and transport costs and lower interest charges. The downstream plastics producers of these countries enjoy the benefits of local petrochemical industries such as unsecured credit, technical services, just-in-time deliveries and other services from the midstream sector. They also enjoy contract pricing from the midstream sector that insulates them from wide fluctuations in times of regional supply imbalances.

Without a midstream sector, the Philippine plastics fabricators will be vulnerable to regional spot market pricing that will never allow them to be competitive with imported plastics products whose resins inputs at contract pricing can be as much as 40% to 50% lower than spot market prices.

THERE WILL BE "NO MORE TEARS," indeed, if an irrational tariff reduction program is allowed to take its due course. There will be no more tears left for all local industries and workers.

No more factories. No more jobs. No more taxes. No more tears, because there will be nothing more to cry about.

Wala nang iluluha ang ating mga lokal na industriya, mga manggagawa at kanilang mga pamilya na tiyak na apektado sa pagdagsa ng mga angkat na produkto, dahil sa pagbagsak ng mga taripa. Kapag nagsara na ang mga pabrika. Kapag wala ng trabaho ang mga manggagawa.

Ngunit huwag na tayong mag-iyakan! Sa halip, magtulungan tayo at magkaisa.

The time to cast away the crab mentality and start helping one another is now! We appeal to all the sectors and stakeholders of the petrochemical and plastics industries to unite and confront their problems, rather than opt to destroy one sector of the industry spectrum.

If we stand united and work together to rationalize the entire industry, not only for the tariff structure but also for the other significant inputs to production such as power, fuel, transport and cost of money, then we can have *NO MORE FEARS* of having any sector collapse to the detriment of the entire value chain.

Association of Petrochemical Manufacturers of the Philippines (APMP)

(NOTE: The listing on "2000 Affected Downstream Companies" in almost unreadable font size contained names of companies which petitioned the Tariff Commission for upward adjustments in AFTA-CEPT tariffs of the articles they produced, including even petrochemical manufacturers!)

EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

INQUIRER

Vol. 17 No. 353
ISSN
0116-2642

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2002

OPINION

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
▪Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
▪P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
▪Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
▪Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 ▪Advertising 897-4807
▪Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **ISAGANI YAMBOT**
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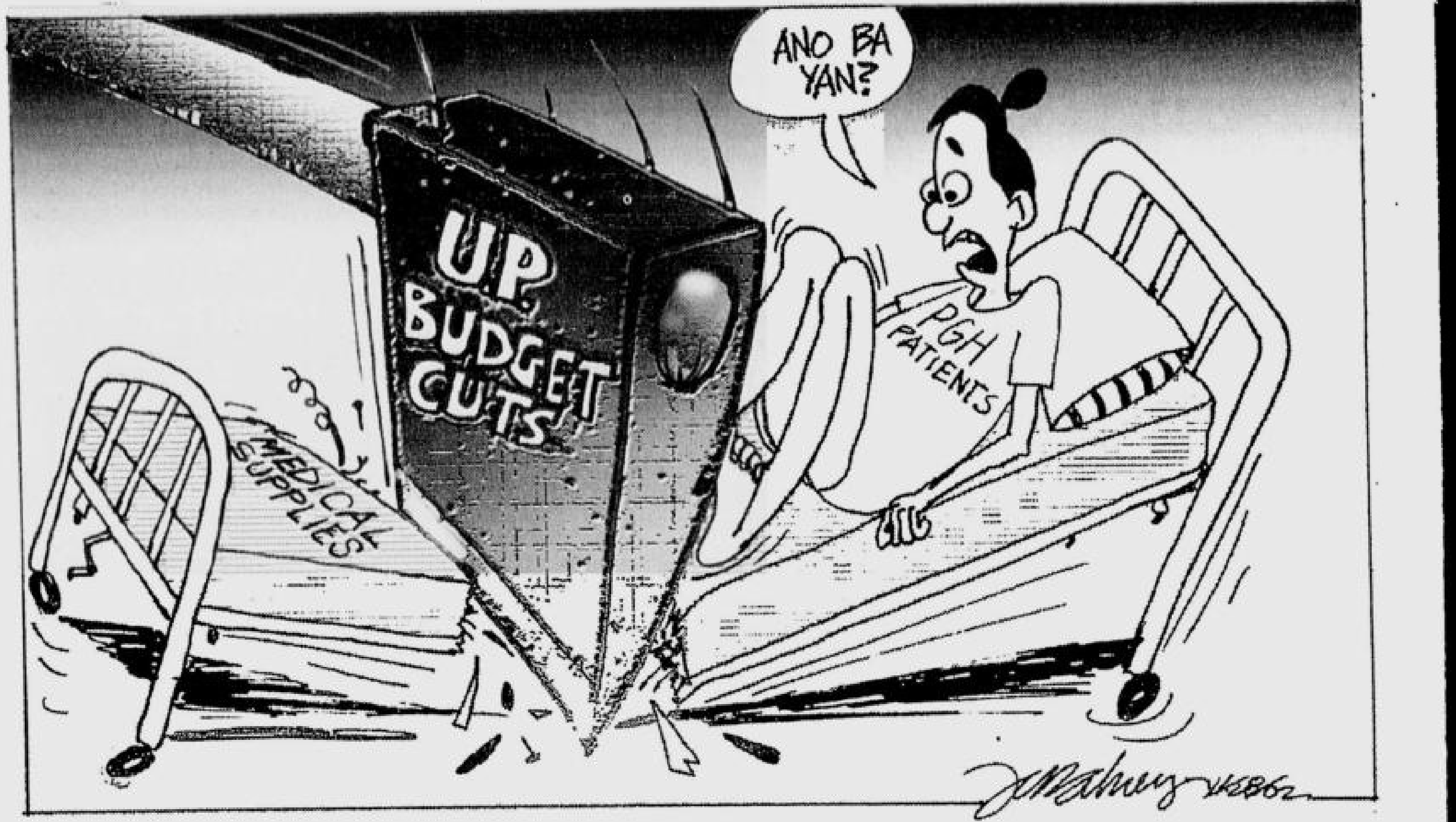

Political storms

EDITORIAL

THE MACAPAGAL administration has been looking like it is in a state of siege during the last couple of weeks. Just as President Macapagal-Arroyo was preparing for a major policy pronouncement on Nov. 30 to roll back the tide of declining public satisfaction over and confidence in her administration, several political storms rocked her administration.

A week ago, the disclosure of a plan for government control of the Manila Electric Co.'s board of directors and the takeover of its management sparked a backlash. The takeover plan was an upshot of the Supreme Court decision ordering Meralco to refund close to four million electricity users for charges disallowed by the Court. The refund is estimated to run into billions of pesos, piling up a crushing obligation on Meralco and precipitating a financial crisis in the country's largest utility company. While there was popular applause for the Court's decision, the backlash from the takeover plan wiped out whatever populist gains the administration garnered from the President's announcement that she would implement it.

This was followed shortly by the charges aired by Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez that Justice Secretary Hernando Perez had allegedly "extorted" $2 million from him for reasons that strain credulity. The damaging impact of Jimenez's charges does not come from the charges themselves but from the fact that his speech stole the thunder from the announcement that Perez was going on leave so that he could defend himself better against Jimenez's allegations.

The President had planned to announce Perez's leave during her Nov. 30 Ulat sa Bayan to give impact to her decisions aimed at regaining the political initiative. Instead of delivering a public opinion coup, the administration's timetable was upset by Jimenez's speech. The planned announcement was quickly overtaken by events. Jimenez's charges put the administration on the defensive and made it look like it was just reacting to events.

This dramatic turn of events underlines the volatility of Philippine politics in the run-up to the 2004 presidential election. One important lesson it teaches is that static political scenarios are likely to change due to unpredictable events. We learned this not so long ago from the fall of President Joseph Estrada whose political fate was decided by startling events that happened five days before he was toppled.

The administration may well dust off the backlash from the Jimenez attack, but the President faces a tougher job in regaining the initiative when she addresses the nation on Nov. 30. In order to be on top of events, she has to spell out economic or financial policy initiatives that can hold back the galloping deficit and political decisions that can infuse more dynamism into her Cabinet.

A widespread mood of pessimism has set in, especially in the business community which seems to have reached the conclusion that the government is not going anywhere and is tolerant of corruption. This pessimism is reflected in confidence index ratings and public satisfaction polls, and in the sluggishness of business.

Perez may be able to punch holes in Jimenez's allegations and credibility, but there are other transactions that are seen as tests of the administration's determination to fight corruption. One of these is the Piatco contract to build and operate the new Terminal 3 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Reflecting the government's position, the solicitor general has asked the Supreme Court to cancel the contract on the grounds that the amendments to it are not only onerous but illegal. This contract has been widely denounced for being onerous and for giving Piatco extremely advantageous terms prejudicial to public interest. A government decision declaring the contracts illegal and an announcement of the steps it would take to speed up the opening of the new terminal could revive public confidence in the administration's capacity to undertake reforms.

The Senate blue ribbon committee is due to announce the conclusions of its hearings on the Piatco deal. The administration should not take its cue from the Senate. It should define its position on key issues and set policy directions.

For some time now, the business community has been growing impatient over the lack of reform initiatives. The Nov. 30 Ulat should be the occasion for the administration to seize the initiative and manage events according to its goals.

Free rides for relocated squatters in new trains

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I DON'T understand why the Department of Transportation is neglecting the Philippine National Railways when it can do a lot to alleviate the congestion in our roads. In the 1950s and 1960s, the railroad was the spine of the transportation system in Luzon running from Damortis, La Union, in the north to Legazpi, Albay, in the south. It transported passengers and cargo quickly and comfortably. Vacationists going to Baguio used the PNR's first-class, air-conditioned coaches until Damortis and then rode air-conditioned cars and buses up to the cool City of Pines.

Even President Diosdado Macapagal used the train in going to Baguio with his family (including the then cute tyke, Gloria). In their coach, the President tried to catch up with his paperwork. His staff and Malacañang reporters occupied another coach.

The Filipinos' love affair with the motorcar—and negligence on the part of PNR and other government officials—started the decline of the PNR. Theft of the steel rails for sale to junk dealers almost finished it off. PNR's headquarters and main station, Tutuban, was sold to a land developer, which turned it into a shopping mall.

Now at least some officials of the government (none of whom, ironically, comes from the DOTC) have realized the value of the railroad and are going to revive it. Chairman Bayani Fernando of the Metro Manila Development Authority wants to improve the commuter train system to relieve some of the load on Metro Manila's few and narrow roads. Housing Secretary Michael Defensor has started work to revive the South Line to give relocated squatters quick—and free—transportation to their jobs in the metropolis. And a big North American railway company, as well as two other foreign groups, have expressed interest in undertaking the North Luzon Railways project that will provide Metro Manila and Clark and Subic with a rapid transit system.

Like I said, I don't understand why the DOTC did not see this earlier. If it had, we wouldn't be having the current traffic nightmares on the streets of Metro Manila and the highways of Luzon. Successive DOTC and PNR officials were either negligent, lazy or incompetent.

Defensor's plan deserves everybody's wholehearted support. It will finally solve the squatting problem that was exacerbated by that stupid Lina Law and by vote-hungry politicians. Squatters congregate in urban areas, enduring the hellish living conditions in the squatter colonies, to be near their means of livelihood. Even when they're relocated to housing units outside the congested cities, they forsake the fresh air and open space of the countryside to go back to their fetid squatter colonies. Reason: the relocation sites are far away from their places of work. They lose a lot of money commuting.

With the railroad, the relocated squatters can commute fast to and from the city. The diesel locomotives and coaches to be donated by Japan travel at 70 kph. It will take a train only 20 minutes from Manila to Cabuyao, Laguna, and another 10 minutes to Calauan. What's more, the relocated people don't have to pay any fare. Yes sir, the ride will be free for relocated squatters.

The beauty of this is that the old railroad tracks don't have to be replaced, Defensor said. The trains will fit into the present narrow gauge tracks. The squatters living beside the railroad tracks will be given units in the relocation sites, to spare them from accidents and because the new trains need wider space.

After the first phase to Calamba and Calauan, the railroad will be extended to Quezon and ultimately Legazpi. At the same time, the North Luzon Railway to Clark and Subic will be underway and, perhaps, also the North Rail back to Damortis.

Another benefit of reviving the PNR is that the narrow streets of Manila and neighboring towns and cities will be relieved of the giant trucks and container vans going to and from the North and South Harbors. There is a spur of rail tracks going from the piers past Tutuban to areas outside Metro Manila. Instead of being trucked through the narrow and congested streets of the metropolis, cargo from the Port Area can be taken out there aboard railroad cars.

* * *

Another transportation route the DOTC has forgotten is our rivers, lakes and bays. These were our transport routes before the advent of the railroad and the automobile. They are still popular transport routes in Bangkok and other cities in Europe and Australia. Magsaysay Lines tried a line on the Pasig River with big *bancas*. It failed because the boats were so small and so low in the water that the faint-hearted dared not take them. Besides, the polluted water assailed their noses.

But if bigger enclosed boats were used instead, the ride would be much more pleasant. Not the tall, double-deckers of the Hong Kong Ferry but the single-decker, shallow draft boats of Disney World in Orlando, Florida. They can negotiate the shallow waters of Pasig River and go under the bridges. These boats can service the lakeshore towns of Rizal and Laguna, not only making the isolated barangay accessible but also taking some of the load off the land routes to the towns.

In the same way, part of the load on the Coastal Road and the Aguinaldo Highway to Cavite can be relieved by a ferry service across Manila Bay from Luneta to Cavite City. Also, a ferry service along the Tinejeros-Tullahan River from Bulacan, through Malabon, to Manila and Pasay can get some of the load off MacArthur Highway, Edsa, Rizal and Taft Avenues.

We are a maritime country, and we should take advantage of our waterways and use them to transport goods and people like they used to do in the old days, before we were seduced by the car.

Teachers

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER writing an article last May about a teacher named Josette Talamera-Biyo. She was the science teacher from Iloilo who bagged the Intel Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award in a science fair in Kentucky, besting 90 other finalists from all over the world. She was the first Asian teacher to do so since the awards began in 1997. It was her answers to questions during her seven-minute presentation that won it for her.

Asked by the panel why she was teaching high school although she had a doctorate in biology, she answered, "Who else will teach the kids?" When the panel expressed shock that she was getting only $300 a month for her pains, she said, "I did not get my PhD just to check papers. I got it to teach children."

Biyo wrote to me shortly after that, saying she never expected to see herself the subject of a column that she followed loyally. I never got to write her back (as I've never gotten to writing back other letter-writers, some of whom truly deserve replies—I beg your indulgence there), but this is as good an opportunity as any to say that is the least of the things she deserves. Quite incidentally, she also told me laughingly that since the news item and my column on her appeared, her family has had its peace shattered from intrusions by the media. Used to a quiet life, her father had to flee for the farm to escape the attentions of reporters. I presume that's over now: There's something to be said too for media's short attention span, or downright fickleness.

I remembered Biyo after I read last Tuesday about the Department of Education being worried that public school teachers were leaving the fold, lured into public and private schools abroad by better pay. Secretary Edilberto de Jesus says he does not know the exact figure, but the reports indicate it is a sizeable one. Needless to say, the ones being pirated are the best in their fields.

The DepEd, says De Jesus, is powerless to stop the exodus. "We cannot fight the opportunities if they present themselves." He is hoping, however, that the loss will be made up for by new entrants. What the DepEd could do to keep the replacements is to sustain specialization-training and skills-upgrading. It could do with more help from the private sector in that respect, such as the one Metrobank is doing, which is giving cash prizes to outstanding teachers.

Biyo of course is not the rule. She is the exception. As is Ryan Balili who graduated last summer from Mindanao State University summa cum laude in physics, with an average grade of 1.13, and wants to teach. I also wrote about him last April, impressed by his ability to combine brilliance and dedication for one so young. He knows he could apply just about anywhere and be admitted in a flash, and he knows the temptations that lie ahead, not least lucrative work abroad. He does dream of bagging a Carnegie-Mellon scholarship in the US, but only so he could bring back more knowledge about condensed matter back to his country. "I want to make physics fun for my countrymen," he says.

But though they are the exception rather than the rule, they give us a glimpse of the nature—and way out—of the problem. Chief of it is to show that teaching is not really about money. I do not mean by this that the public school teachers' pay should not be raised. That should be the No. 1 priority of this government, and it is lamentable that the one thing Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo made so immediately after she took over Erap was soldiers' pay. The salaries and benefits of public school teachers are so scandalously meager they can only truly attract the desperate. That should be remedied as a matter of justice.

But you can never really raise teachers' pay enough to draw in a horde. It's not the pay that makes people like Biyo and Balili want to become teachers. It's idealism, a consuming need to serve the people, and sheer love of learning. Which is what teaching also is; the best teachers are the best learners. That is the thing to harp on. Specialization-training and skills-upgrading should help, but far more so is giving teachers the recognition and appreciation they deserve.

Which brings me to one other important point, which is that that is the very thing teachers do not have today. It is not merely that teachers, particularly those in public school, are not appreciated, it is that they are derided. A fact that has monstrous consequences for the future of this country. I don't know how this has come about. When we were kids, teachers were pillars of the community. They were not rich (teaching will never be conducive to that) but they were looked up to in the neighborhood. Today, they are still not rich (they are infinitely poorer) but they do not have the adulation of the community to compensate for it. Teachers today are not raised up in pedestals, they are put down in sitcoms. Teaching has become even lower than working as a *Japayuki*. "*Buti pa*," as parents tell kids who can't hack it, "*magturo ka na lang.*"

That is the alarming thing about the exodus of good teachers. I don't know that they can be so easily replaced, given the kind of status, or lack of it, teachers suffer from now. I am glad that Metrobank is pitching in to help: More than the cash prize, it's the recognition given to outstanding teachers that they are bound to appreciate. I am even gladder that someone like Gil Portes has cast his eye on the plight of teachers and made a movie like "Mga Munting Tinig," a story of a public school teacher who teaches a community to sing—and thereby hope—again. That is the only way I can see to make teaching a desirable, or even coveted, option for people again.

Making "Ma'am" and "Sir" mean the world to them.

Hard to justify Alvarez's removal due to high ratings

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IF a group is out to destroy a target, they should at least agree on the details, otherwise their plot will fall apart and their credibility suffers. Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, in his recent privilege speech, said that Justice Secretary Hernando Perez extorted $2 million from him in February of 2001. He claimed that this amount was transferred from his personal account to the Coutts Bank account of businessman Ernest Escaler in Hong Kong, Perez's supposed friend, "for Perez's use." Jimenez said he paid off Perez to buy peace of mind for his family, and the inference is that this had to do with the extradition case against MJ that the justice department was pushing.

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Earlier, Rep. Willie Villarama, who, by the way, is the first cousin of Jimenez's second wife Carol, not just a close friend as the media put it, said the $2 million was a bribe in connection with Perez's approval of the Impsa contract. Then Sen. Panfilo Lacson rode on Villarama's exposé and said the bribe had to do with the Impsa contract indeed, but that the amount involved was not just $2 million but $14 million. No, Villarama told the INQUIRER as quoted in its Nov. 21 issue, the $2 million was different from the $14 million bribe, though both amounts "apparently went to the same mystery account in Hong Kong."

Which is which, gentlemen? Make up your mind. If you expect the public to believe you, you should get your act together.

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Apart from these discrepancies, several questions beg to be raised. There's the timing of MJ's bombshell—why only now? Would Perez be so stupid as to extort or accept a bribe from MJ so soon after the new government assumed power and considering MJ's reputation as a dealer of false declarations, as the US extradition case puts it, and his closeness to Erap against whom Perez was building a case? Perez must surely not have forgotten that he would be a major target of the Erap camp because of his key role in Erap's impeachment trial.

If MJ really bribed Perez to go slow on his extradition case, did the latter's subsequent behavior indicate this? It doesn't. That extradition case against MJ was filed before the Manila regional trial court in March 2000, during the time of Justice Secretary Serafin Cuevas, and interestingly it has been handled from the very beginning until now by Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez, a career DOJ official who is now acting secretary. I recall that I confronted Perez during President Macapagal-Arroyo's birthday party in Malacañang last April about rumors that he was sitting on the MJ case because he had been paid off. Perez quickly pulled Gutierrez over and said to me, "*Ayan, yan ang tanungin mo. Siya ang humahawak niyang kasong iyan.*" Gutierrez said there was no truth whatsoever to the rumor that the DOJ was sitting on MJ's case, and the fact was that it was in the court and her office was following it assiduously.

I recall that when the RTC allowed MJ to post bail, the DOJ under Perez appealed the ruling to the Supreme Court, and last September the Court ruled that MJ could not post bail—a triumph for the DOJ. MJ filed a motion for reconsideration, but as Perez stressed on "Online" the other night, he opposed that motion.

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No, I'm afraid that until MJ can show concrete proof of payment, people will continue to believe that he's making up the story to preempt the forthcoming final SC ruling on his bail petition and to destroy Perez in revenge for what happened to Erap. But there's also the interesting theory that MJ detonated the bomb to provoke Perez to file a libel case against him, so that he could stay here longer to defend himself.

With regard to Villarama, I feel sad for him. Of course, blood is thicker than water, but did he have to pander to MJ?

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Over the past months, a small group in the Palace has been very determined to ease out Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez. Their efforts escalated when the Environment Management Bureau chief during Erap's time, Peter Anthony Abaya, was charged by Alvarez with grave misconduct for allowing the illegal importation of ozone-depleting substances by fly-by-night operators. This group tried to portray Alvarez to the President as incompetent and make her believe he won't get past the Commission of Appointments. When he passed the CA on his own merit, because his former Senate and House colleagues were fully aware of his dedication to the cause of the environment, as typified by the laws he had authored, the group became embittered. Now it is again moving to get Alvarez out of the DENR, in cahoots with a handful of disgruntled congressmen lobbying for Picop.

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I hope the President will not yield to them because Alvarez enjoys broad support from various sectors, notably many religious leaders who approve his environmental programs and laud his fearless campaign against predators. The latest nationwide survey of Pulse Asia from July 13 to 27 indicated that the DENR's programs have a 98 percent awareness and a 55 percent approval rating. Doubtless the big factors here were the DENR's crafting of a democratic pro-poor solution to the 18-year-old problem in Mt. Diwalwal and its unrelenting campaign against illegal loggers. Alvarez himself scored an approval rating of 46 percent, placing sixth among 20 Cabinet members, a jump of 11 percent from the 35 percent approval rating of his predecessor in the same period.

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Bohol's endangered past and creatures

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TO CONTINUE with my "travelogue" on Bohol. On our way back from the Chocolate Hills, we were silently urging on the bus driver so we could reach Loboc while there was enough daylight to allow us to catch a glimpse of the rare and elusive (or so we thought) tarsier. Said to be the world's smallest primate, the tiny, bug-eyed Philippine tarsier can be found only in Bohol.

Much to our dismay, darkness fell even as we were still on the road, and we lost all hope of catching a glimpse of this endangered creature. Still, on crossing the boundary of Loboc, our guide told our driver to park on the roadside, by a sign that advertised boat rides down the Loboc River and a chance to meet the tarsier. As I made my way down the rickety bamboo steps on the hillside to a small souvenir stall, I saw some of my companions holding up what looked like small, stuffed tarsier toys. To my astonishment, they turned out to be living specimen, tiny creatures with soft, light brown fur, curling tails and those huge orbs for eyes.

The store owner had about six of them perched on her arms and shoulders, smilingly handing some of them to members of our delegation. The tarsiers reacted placidly, blinking as camera flashbulbs broke the darkness, and silently enduring being stroked and fondled. Only later were we told that when they don't like the way they're handled, particularly if stroked on the head, the tarsiers could start biting and scratching.

There's an official tarsier reservation in Loboc, we were told later, but the tarsiers we saw were being raised by a couple who used to work in the reservation. Judging from the number of creatures she had on hand, it's obvious the store owner is fairly successful at breeding and domesticating this endangered creature. "They will breed only if they like their handlers," she said. Not being privy to the politics of tarsier propagation, we were only too glad to be given the chance to meet Bohol's most popular "citizen" up close and personal.

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THE NEXT day, having dispensed with our exposure program to a pilot program on local health care in five municipalities in Bohol, which I plan on tackling in future columns, our group reverted once more to tourist mode.

This was the first visit to Bohol for many in the group, composed mostly of mayors, councilors and city or municipal health officers from Bicol and from Aborlan, Palawan. Thus, we made obligatory visits to Bohol's prime tourist spots. First on our list was lunch at a seafood restaurant that stands on stilts over the Bohol Strait, having our fill of seafood fare, from fat shrimps and prawns to crabs, grilled squid, fish and even flesh-colored seaweed called "*lato*."

We then drove over a bridge to Panglao Island, stopping at the Bohol Beach Club public beach. It being a Sunday, the beach was fille[illegible] with families and other groups, picnicking i[illegible] the shade of huts and kiosks. A short wal[illegible] away was the more secluded beach of the Bo[illegible]hol Beach Club, and when we explained th[illegible] we only wanted to view its facilities, the club [illegible] personnel graciously let us have a look-see, including a peek at the "Family Cabin," a luxurious two-room affair complete with a Jacuzzi on the verandah facing the beach.

* * *

FROM PANGLAO, it was on to the historic church of Baclayon, with a brief stopover for the obligatory "*kodakan*" at the monument commemorating the blood compact. A sign proudly proclaimed the exchange of bloodletting between Datu Sikatuna and Miguel Lopez de Legazpi as the "first international treaty," but I have my doubts about that.

Baclayon is said to be one of the oldest churches and parishes in the country, constructed out of coral stone and plaster mixed with egg whites, and is in a state of disrepair. The museum guide said the national government, in preparation for the centennial, had given Baclayon funds to restore the church, but even this grant could not cover all of the construction work needed to restore the church in mint condition. Only the roof was repaired, with the restorers committing a major gaffe of replacing the original tiled roof with galvanized iron sheets to save on costs.

Myrna Pagsuberon, a lawyer based in the Holy Spirit School who's been a driving force in the promotion of women's rights and welfare in Bohol, told us indignantly of the "restoration" work done on the ceiling, which used to be covered with 400-year-old frescoes. To the citizens' disbelief, the frescoes were simply painted over and then replaced with quite ugly slapdash art work. "Look, it's unfinished. That's because the Boholanons raised quite an outcry," said Myrna.

* * *

A VISIT to Baclayon's famous museum of [illegible]rch artifacts and relics was likewise an ex[illegible] in frustration and depression. The items [illegible]bit—centuries-old vestments woven [illegible]d and silver thread, chalices, crucifix[illegible] huge missals and songbooks—are [illegible]expertly displayed, housed in simple [illegible]abinets or exposed entirely to the air.

[illegible]e delightful "giant" missals and songbooks, for instance, are visibly crumbling; clearly, they could benefit from temperature— and humidity—controlled display cases. When I asked the guide if they were receiving any assistance, even if only technical, from the National Museum or the NCCA, she said whatever money was coming their way was going into roof repair. How long will it take before the artifacts of Baclayon crumble and deteriorate, depriving the generations to come of a glimpse of our past and our heritage?

This, then was our Bohol experience, a mere nibble of what I'm sure are the island's innumerable pleasures and delights.

Seven for the wall

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

TOMORROW, the eve of Bonifacio Day and All Heroes Day, the names of seven people will be inscribed on the black granite wall reserved for the hundreds of brave and selfless Filipinos who spilled their blood and offered the best of their lives for the motherland.

The Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation will hold its annual Celebration of Martyrs and Heroes tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. at the Bantayog Memorial Center located on Edsa corner Quezon Avenue in Diliman, Quezon City. Come and be inspired.

Almost every year, I find time to go to the place. I know many of the names written there. A good number of them I had known personally when they were alive. Others I know well because of the dramatic impact of their death. And I wrote about them.

Almost every year, I try to find time to write a little piece on the new entries, most of whom are little known and long dead. But mind you, their idealism and courage have not been lost on those whom they served and loved. I write hoping that their deeds would be known, for them to live again even just in my few humble words.

Ellecer Eugenio Cortes (1949-1971) lived for a brief 22 years and is well remembered by his friends and colleagues as the first martyred student leader from the University of the Philippines who worked persistently to link student activism with the peasantry. Called Boyong by his friends, Cortes went to many places in the country to reach out to peasants and help them find their collective voice. He and his friends wanted to build a mass base among the peasantry that would become part of a nationalist movement. Cortes, along with two companions, was killed by gunfire on Oct. 1, 1971 in Cabangan, Zambales.

Eugene David Conejero Grey (1949-1973) was born to a comfortable family that traces its lineage to a British navy officer. His great grandfather was an officer in Aguinaldo's revolutionary army. Activism was not unusual among the Greys. (Star witness Clarissa Grey Ocampo is his cousin.) As a student of the Lyceum, Grey espoused students' rights and reforms in education. Described as "pure energy," Grey joined protest movements that took him to the streets and, later, the countryside. Grey was killed in Mt. Banahaw during a military raid. His body was never recovered.

Manuel Llanes Hizon Jr. (1952-1974) was one of two children of a well-to-do family. A bright student, he attended Lourdes School and later Ateneo de Manila University where he became head of the Student Catholic Action. His friends called him a "Catholic activist" whose faith was tested outside the confines of the Jesuit campus. After graduating in 1972, Hizon juggled activism and corporate life. He later assumed a leadership role in a Christian activist group that took him away from the comforts he knew. Then he decided to head for the hills. He was killed in an armed encounter in Nueva Ecija.

Vergel Edquilante Landrito (1950-1972), also a UP student, worked among the youth and later as an organizer in an urban poor community in order to raise their awareness about societal problems. He joined an armed group to fight the dictatorship even while focusing an Aeta communities near the US bases. He and everyone in his group were killed in an armed encounter in April 1972.

Lazaro P. Silva (1952-1975) was the son of a Philippine Constabulary officer and an unlikely revolutionary. He attended the Philippine Science High School and later Ateneo de Manila University. He left school to do full-time political organizing and was detained for six months for printing manifestos. He joined the armed resistance and immersed himself among the rural poor. During a gun battle, Silva fought off the military while urging his comrades to leave. He died at the age of 22.

Marcelino Mercado Villanueva (1955-1985) came from a poor family in Tondo. After graduating as salutatorian, he was admitted to the Philippine Science High School. He later moved to Torres High School and then dropped out to join militant groups. He worked with the highly militant Zone One Tondo Organization. The Marcos dictatorship hunted him down and put him behind bars. After his release, Villanueva joined the armed resistance for a while, then went back to work among the urban poor. He was killed in 1985 during a military raid of an underground house in Quezon City.

Bonifacio Hubilla Gillego (1921-2002), a freedom fighter, lived to a ripe age of 81, his life spent in pursuit of justice. Gillego started off as an intelligence officer in the military. He was in the resistance movement during World War II and later saw action in Korea. He also worked in war-torn Laos. Gillego was sent abroad to study and was well versed in the Marxist ideology. After his military career ended, Gillego was elected delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention. When Marcos imposed martial rule, Gillego fought against it and became a hunted man. He escaped and lived in exile in the US for many years. There he joined the Movement for a Free Philippines and worked with anti-Marcos forces. He did back-breaking research on the so-called war exploits of Marcos and later exposed the dictator's fake war medals in the US press. He wrote lengthy articles to show the real face of the dictatorship. After Marcos fell in 1986, Gillego served the new government in different capacities. He served as representative of Sorsogon's 2nd District from 1987 to 1996, championing the cause of the landless and pushing for radical land reform. Uncompromising, humble and upright, Boni, as he was fondly called, was much-loved and admired by people from all walks of life.

Altruism

YOUNG BLOOD

Josephine Querubin

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I KNOW almost everything my grandmother does because she is the one who takes care of me when my mother is away, earning a living. I see what she does from the moment she gets up from bed until she retires at night.

I know she takes a bath so she will feel fresh and clean the whole day. I know she cooks and eats food to remain healthy. I know she takes care of me because I am her grandchild and she loves me. I know she reads the Bible to nourish her spirit. I know she writes my uncles and aunties and other members of our clan to discuss matters affecting our family.

But there is something I cannot fully understand, She is always "on the go," extending her services to the people in our community.

My grandmother's house seems to have become an extension of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Labor, a trial court, a lending agency, the Bureau of Lands, a flower shop, etc.

No, she is not a barangay official, so she does not get any honorarium for what she does. Neither is she a social worker, so she does not receive any salary. She does not get anything in return for all the services she renders to our neighbors. But she says she has to do all these things as a concerned citizen.

Once a woman came to the house complaining that her family did not have rice to cook for dinner. Grandmother helped her borrow P20 from a neighbor so she could buy a kilo of rice.

A woman gave birth and did not have baby dresses and diapers for her baby. So grandmother gave her my cousins' old baby dresses and diapers as well as mine.

Two unemployed neighbors came asking for help, and grandmother talked to her friends and got jobs for them in a five-star hotel and a restaurant.

A woman with a heart disease needed an operation. Grandmother sought help from somebody so that our neighbor would be admitted to the Philippine Heart Center.

The mother of a man who was in prison came to ask for her advice. Grandmother requested my auntie to call up the Integrated Bar of the Philippines so that he could get free legal services.

A man who had some problems with his land did not know what to do. Grandmother called up another auntie and asked her to get information from the Bureau of Lands and the Register of Deeds.

An old woman came to complain about a neighbor who would not pay her loan. Grandmother listened to her story. The next day it was the debtor's turn to air her side, and grandmother listened to her with sympathy.

When a neighbor got sick, grandmother was ready to offer him oranges and *sambong* tea.

A woman came asking for flowers she would put on her grandmother's coffin. Grandmother picked the biggest and most beautiful flowers from her garden and gave them to her.

Grandmother is a friend who does not hesitate to give help. No, she isn't "big time," though some of her friends are. Grandmother met them when she was still selling ornamental plants. So when our neighbors need help, grandmother facilitates things.

One day, one of my aunties came home with a lot of things to read. She was studying one afternoon when I heard her trying to memorize the powers of the state. "With the power of taxation, the state gets taxes from the people. In return, the people get services and projects from the government. With power of eminent domain, the state acquires the property of a private citizen. In return, the private citizen gets just compensation or monetary benefit. With its police power, the state restricts and regulates the property and liberty of private citizens. In return, the private citizen gets the altruistic feeling that he has contributed to the general welfare."

I interrupted her to ask, "What is the meaning of 'altruistic feeling,' Tita?"

She replied, "It's a feeling, an intangible feeling that a person gets when he contributes or does something good for the general public or for the majority of the people. It is the good feeling you get when you do unselfish things for others."

As I walked out of the door, I found myself repeating aloud, "The good feeling you get when you do unselfish things for others."

The next day, grandmother was again busy with all her social work—giving help to the needy, lending an ear to those with problems and providing a little food to the hungry. She had a good heart and he was happy doing all those things. And her enthusiasm was contagious.

"For her charity, do you think mother gets anything?" my auntie asked me.

After casting a loving look at my grandmother, I turned to my auntie and said smiling, "Of course, she gets something. An altruistic feeling."

Josephine Querubin, 12, is a first-year student of Luis Bernardo Memorial High School in Luisiana, Laguna.

THEY SAID

Insufficient basis

"You don't start an investigation based purely on news clippings."

—Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, replying to a question whether his office would immediately conduct an investigation on the allegations against Justice Secretary Hernando Perez

Meralco's survival

"I don't care about the side issues or intra-corporate dispute. What I'm saying is that no matter who owns Meralco, it has to be kept viable."

—Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura

Unstable finances

"A stable outlook appears increasingly inappropriate in the context of the seemingly relentless decline in public revenue, particularly when judged against the background of a modest recovery and a benign macroeconomic environment."

—London-based ratings agency Fitch Ratings on the Philippines

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We then drove over a bridge to Panglao Island, stopping at the Bohol Beach Club public beach. It being a Sunday, the beach was filled with families and other groups, picnicking in the shade of huts and kiosks. A short walk away was the more secluded beach of the Bohol Beach Club, and when we explained that we only wanted to view its facilities, the club personnel graciously let us have a look-see, including a peek at the "Family Cabin," a luxurious two-room affair complete with a Jacuzzi on the verandah facing the beach.

* * *

FROM PANGLAO, it was on to the historic church of Baclayon, with a brief stopover for the obligatory *"kodakan"* at the monument commemorating the blood compact. A sign proudly proclaimed the exchange of bloodletting between Datu Sikatuna and Miguel Lopez de Legazpi as the "first international treaty," but I have my doubts about that.

Baclayon is said to be one of the oldest churches and parishes in the country, constructed out of coral stone and plaster mixed with egg whites, and is in a state of disrepair. The museum guide said the national government, in preparation for the centennial, had given Baclayon funds to restore the church, but even this grant could not cover all of the construction work needed to restore the church in mint condition. Only the roof was repaired, with the restorers committing a major gaffe of replacing the original tiled roof with galvanized iron sheets to save on costs.

Myrna Pagsuberon, a lawyer based in the Holy Spirit School who's been a driving force in the promotion of women's rights and welfare in Bohol, told us indignantly of the "restoration" work done on the ceiling, which used to be covered with 400-year-old frescoes. To the citizens' disbelief, the frescoes were simply painted over and then replaced with quite ugly slapdash art work. "Look, it's unfinished. That's because the Boholanons raised quite an outcry," said Myrna.

* * *

A VISIT to Baclayon's famous museum of [illegible]rch artifacts and relics was likewise an ex-[illegible] in frustration and depression. The items [illegible]bit—centuries-old vestments woven [illegible]l and silver thread, chalices, crucifix-[illegible] huge missals and songbooks—are [illegible]expertly displayed, housed in simple [illegible]abinets or exposed entirely to the air.

The delightful "giant" missals and songbooks, for instance, are visibly crumbling; clearly, they could benefit from temperature— and humidity—controlled display cases. When I asked the guide if they were receiving any assistance, even if only technical, from the National Museum or the NCCA, she said whatever money was coming their way was going into roof repair. How long will it take before the artifacts of Baclayon crumble and deteriorate, depriving the generations to come of a glimpse of our past and our heritage?

This, then was our Bohol experience, a mere nibble of what I'm sure are the island's innumerable pleasures and delights.

Seven for the wall

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

TOMORROW, the eve of Bonifacio Day and All Heroes Day, the names of seven people will be inscribed on the black granite wall reserved for the hundreds of brave and selfless Filipinos who spilled their blood and offered the best of their lives for the motherland.

The Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation will hold its annual Celebration of Martyrs and Heroes tomorrow at 3:00 p.m. at the Bantayog Memorial Center located on Edsa corner Quezon Avenue in Diliman, Quezon City. Come and be inspired.

Almost every year, I find time to go to the place. I know many of the names written there. A good number of them I had known personally when they were alive. Others I know well because of the dramatic impact of their death. And I wrote about them.

Almost every year, I try to find time to write a little piece on the new entries, most of whom are little known and long dead. But mind you, their idealism and courage have not been lost on those whom they served and loved. I write hoping that their deeds would be known, for them to live again even just in my few humble words.

Ellecer Eugenio Cortes (1949-1971) lived for a brief 22 years and is well remembered by his friends and colleagues as the first martyred student leader from the University of the Philippines who worked persistently to link student activism with the peasantry. Called Boyong by his friends, Cortes went to many places in the country to reach out to peasants and help them find their collective voice. He and his friends wanted to build a mass base among the peasantry that would become part of a nationalist movement. Cortes, along with two companions, was killed by gunfire on Oct. 1, 1971 in Cabangan, Zambales.

Eugene David Conejero Grey (1949-1973) was born to a comfortable family that traces its lineage to a British navy officer. His great grandfather was an officer in Aguinaldo's revolutionary army. Activism was not unusual among the Greys. (Star witness Clarissa Grey Ocampo is his cousin.) As a student of the Lyceum, Grey espoused students' rights and reforms in education. Described as "pure energy," Grey joined protest movements that took him to the streets and, later, the countryside. Grey was killed in Mt. Banahaw during a military raid. His body was never recovered.

Manuel Llanes Hizon Jr. (1952-1974) was one of two children of a well-to-do family. A bright student, he attended Lourdes School and later Ateneo de Manila University where he became head of the Student Catholic Action. His friends called him a "Catholic activist" whose faith was tested outside the confines of the Jesuit campus. After graduating in 1972, Hizon juggled activism and corporate life. He later assumed a leadership role in a Christian activist group that took him away from the comforts he knew. Then he decided to head for the hills. He was killed in an armed encounter in Nueva Ecija.

Vergel Edquilante Landrito (1950-1972), also a UP student, worked among the youth and later as an organizer in an urban poor community in order to raise their awareness about societal problems. He joined an armed group to fight the dictatorship even while focusing an Aeta communities near the US bases. He and everyone in his group were killed in an armed encounter in April 1972.

Lazaro P. Silva (1952-1975) was the son of a Philippine Constabulary officer and an unlikely revolutionary. He attended the Philippine Science High School and later Ateneo de Manila University. He left school to do full-time political organizing and was detained for six months for printing manifestos. He joined the armed resistance and immersed himself among the rural poor. During a gun battle, Silva fought off the military while urging his comrades to leave. He died at the age of 22.

Marcelino Mercado Villanueva (1955-1985) came from a poor family in Tondo. After graduating as salutatorian, he was admitted to the Philippine Science High School. He later moved to Torres High School and then dropped out to join militant groups. He worked with the highly militant Zone One Tondo Organization. The Marcos dictatorship hunted him down and put him behind bars. After his release, Villanueva joined the armed resistance for a while, then went back to work among the urban poor. He was killed in 1985 during a military raid of an underground house in Quezon City.

Bonifacio Hubilla Gillego (1921-2002), a freedom fighter, lived to a ripe age of 81, his life spent in pursuit of justice. Gillego started off as an intelligence officer in the military. He was in the resistance movement during World War II and later saw action in Korea. He also worked in war-torn Laos. Gillego was sent abroad to study and was well versed in the Marxist ideology. After his military career ended, Gillego was elected delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention. When Marcos imposed martial rule, Gillego fought against it and became a hunted man. He escaped and lived in exile in the US for many years. There he joined the Movement for a Free Philippines and worked with anti-Marcos forces. He did back-breaking research on the so-called war exploits of Marcos and later exposed the dictator's fake war medals in the US press. He wrote lengthy articles to show the real face of the dictatorship. After Marcos fell in 1986, Gillego served the new government in different capacities. He served as representative of Sorsogon's 2nd District from 1987 to 1996, championing the cause of the landless and pushing for radical land reform. Uncompromising, humble and upright, Boni, as he was fondly called, was much-loved and admired by people from all walks of life.

Altruism

YOUNG BLOOD

Josephine Querubin

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I KNOW almost everything my grandmother does because she is the one who takes care of me when my mother is away, earning a living. I see what she does from the moment she gets up from bed until she retires at night.

I know she takes a bath so she will feel fresh and clean the whole day. I know she cooks and eats food to remain healthy. I know she takes care of me because I am her grandchild and she loves me. I know she reads the Bible to nourish her spirit. I know she writes my uncles and aunties and other members of our clan to discuss matters affecting our family.

But there is something I cannot fully understand. She is always "on the go," extending her services to the people in our community.

My grandmother's house seems to have become an extension of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Labor, a trial court, a lending agency, the Bureau of Lands, a flower shop, etc.

No, she is not a barangay official, so she does not get any honorarium for what she does. Neither is she a social worker, so she does not receive any salary. She does not get anything in return for all the services she renders to our neighbors. But she says she has to do all these things as a concerned citizen.

Once a woman came to the house complaining that her family did not have rice to cook for dinner. Grandmother helped her borrow P20 from a neighbor so she could buy a kilo of rice.

A woman gave birth and did not have baby dresses and diapers for her baby. So grandmother gave her my cousins' old baby dresses and diapers as well as mine.

Two unemployed neighbors came asking for help, and grandmother talked to her friends and got jobs for them in a five-star hotel and a restaurant.

A woman with a heart disease needed an operation. Grandmother sought help from somebody so that our neighbor would be admitted to the Philippine Heart Center.

The mother of a man who was in prison came to ask for her advice. Grandmother requested my auntie to call up the Integrated Bar of the Philippines so that he could get free legal services.

A man who had some problems with his land did not know what to do. Grandmother called up another auntie and asked her to get information from the Bureau of Lands and the Register of Deeds.

An old woman came to complain about a neighbor who would not pay her loan. Grandmother listened to her story. The next day it was the debtor's turn to air her side, and grandmother listened to her with sympathy.

When a neighbor got sick, grandmother was ready to offer him oranges and *sambong* tea.

A woman came asking for flowers she would put on her grandmother's coffin. Grandmother picked the biggest and most beautiful flowers from her garden and gave them to her.

Grandmother is a friend who does not hesitate to give help. No, she isn't "big time," though some of her friends are. Grandmother met them when she was still selling ornamental plants. So when our neighbors need help, grandmother facilitates things.

One day, one of my aunties came home with a lot of things to read. She was studying one afternoon when I heard her trying to memorize the powers of the state. "With the power of taxation, the state gets taxes from the people. In return, the people get services and projects from the government. With power of eminent domain, the state acquires the property of a private citizen. In return, the private citizen gets just compensation or monetary benefit. With its police power, the state restricts and regulates the property and liberty of private citizens. In return, the private citizen gets the altruistic feeling that he has contributed to the general welfare. "

I interrupted her to ask, "What is the meaning of 'altruistic feeling,' Tita?"

She replied, "It's a feeling, an intangible feeling that a person gets when he contributes or does something good for the general public or for the majority of the people. It is the good feeling you get when you do unselfish things for others."

As I walked out of the door, I found myself repeating aloud, "The good feeling you get when you do unselfish things for others."

The next day, grandmother was again busy with all her social work—giving help to the needy, lending an ear to those with problems and providing a little food to the hungry. She had a good heart and he was happy doing all those things. And her enthusiasm was contagious.

"For her charity, do you think mother gets anything?" my auntie asked me.

After casting a loving look at my grandmother, I turned to my auntie and said smiling, "Of course, she gets something. An altruistic feeling."

Josephine Querubin, 12, is a first-year student of Luis Bernardo Memorial High School in Luisiana, Laguna.

THEY SAID

Insufficient basis

"You don't start an investigation based purely on news clippings."

—Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, replying to a question whether his office would immediately conduct an investigation on the allegations against Justice Secretary Hernando Perez

Meralco's survival

"I don't care about the side issues or intra-corporate dispute. What I'm saying is that no matter who owns Meralco, it has to be kept viable."

—Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura

Unstable finances

"A stable outlook appears increasingly inappropriate in the context of the seemingly relentless decline in public revenue, particularly when judged against the background of a modest recovery and a benign macroeconomic environment."

—London-based ratings agency Fitch Ratings on the Philippines

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Consultations on charter change going on

THIS has reference to the letter of Rene Gumba of the Ateneo de Naga University last Nov. 22, 2002.

I wish to make it clear that the scenario of Congress constituting itself into a constituent assembly by February of next year was in response to a question asked during the press conference held in Villa Caceres Hotel, Naga City. When I was pressed by a member of the local press if Congress could finish deliberating the proposed charter amendments before the 2004 elections, I responded that it was possible if done in that manner.

This does not mean, however, that the Senate and the House of Representatives have prejudged the matter and that this will necessarily be the course Congress will take. No decision has yet been made by both chambers. Moreover, I cannot presume to speak for the other members, Congress being a deliberative body.

We in the House are still soliciting the comments of people across the country, a process which began in Baguio early this year. This is precisely what brought us to Naga. As a matter of fact, after Naga we held another public consultation on the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman. Moreover, we are sending some 50,000 letter-questionnaires to reach out to more people, particularly those who were not able to attend the public hearings.

The House committee on constitutional amendments has been serious in conducting these public consultations for over a year. We do not want these efforts to be compromised. I hope that this will reassure Rene Gumba about the sincerity of the committee in getting the people's pulse.

—ANTONIO EDUARDO B. NACHURA,
chair, committee on constitutional amendments, House of Representatives, Quezon City

Salt spray kills water hyacinths

GOVERNMENTS around the world from the Americas to Africa are worried about the invasion and infestation of their fresh waterways by this aquatic weed, the ubiquitous water hyacinth. Irrigation ditches, canals, rivers, dams and lakes get choked and covered with mats of this pernicious weed, driving other forms of life out of their habitat.

The 24-hectare Lake Sebu in South Cotabato has fishpens that provide jobs and income to the town's fisherfolk. But now the fishpens are totally covered by a dense mat of water hyacinth, making the lake a floating nightmare, according to your correspondent Aquiles Zonio. The municipal government, after failing to control the water hyacinths in Lake Sebu, is worried about the fate of the two other lakes that have started to sprout the weed.

In Catmon, Malabon, there is an abandoned fishpond where bangus was once cultured. Now it has been turned into a dense mat of water hyacinths, with mosquitoes and crawling snakes. Even the mighty tilapia cannot survive there for lack of air and space to breathe. The loss of a lucrative income from growing them has been caused by these floating hyacinth beds.

European Union countries have informed countries around Lake Victoria in South Africa that they will not purchase Nile Perch, a major export earner for the region, if herbicides continue to be used to control of water hyacinths. The herbicides have many side effects on both man and the environment.

Other control measures tried and prescribed for the control of water hyacinths, ranging from cultural to biological, produced varied results and these cannot be applied on a large scale.

Salt solution used as a spray to control water hyacinths has produced fantastic results. In a series of trials using a plastic hand sprayer, 20 grams of salt dissolved in 100 ml. of water knocked the plants dead three days after spraying. The immediate effect is instant wilting of the leaves even before the spray deposits have dried up. The salt solution is equally effective in killing the small biotype and big water hyacinth.

Salt solution is not a herbicide, and therefore not injurious to the environment or a health hazard to men, animals and fishes.

We hope we can continue our investigation on a larger scale and refine the method.

—ANTONIO C. PIZARRO,
65 Tabghali St., Sta. Mesa Hts., Quezon City

Guingona should challenge MLSA in court

NOTHING but a stunt to get some media mileage. That best describes what Vice President Teofisto Guingona is doing.

Let's face it, most people are not so familiar with some provisions of our Constitution as to be able to determine whether some acts are right or wrong. It leaves a bad taste in the mouth when our top leaders have a public spat. The Vice President undermines the position of the President by proclaiming with certainty that what the former has done is unconstitutional. He speaks as if his questions about the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement need not be brought to court anymore.

The Vice President may be right. But if he is so sure of this, then he should stop grandstanding and just bring the case to the Supreme Court.

If he is so concerned about following the Constitution, what bills did he file to enforce the anti-dynasty provision when he was still in Congress? Incidentally, the sectoral representatives are silent on this issue too.

—OSCAR LABRADOR,
1413 Batangas St., Sta. Cruz Manila

Following the 'manufacturer's directions'

JUSTICE Secretary H. Perez might have been linked to a big bribery case, but he certainly did the right thing in refusing a visa to Ms Lamb and Ms Wong, who had contracted a homosexual marriage. It is comforting to know that our civil laws still conform to natural laws, the "manufacturer's directions" provided by our Maker so that we can function well. Aberrations like homosexual marriages will necessarily produce some abnormalities which will affect our whole society in one way or another. Thank you very much, Secretary Perez!

In this connection, Ramon Tulfo should also reflect on the wisdom of the Church in prohibiting the use of contraceptives which is against natural laws. I agree that the Church should not meddle in politics, but reproduction (the couple's cooperation in God's creative power) is not just a political or economic matter. I wonder if Jesus Christ is not displeased with him when he writes like that about the Church.

—Elaine Marie M. Sarmiento,
15 Sta. Lucia St., Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig City 1603

Shared vision of sustainable development

DORIS Nuyda's piece last Nov. 14, entitled "Media can make difference in sustaining environment," was very inspiring. We thank her for echoing our shared vision for a sustainable development. Nuyda's valuable insights must have touched the hearts and minds of millions of readers to also do their share in coastal and resources management.

We shared the article with the other participants to the media conference. We are hoping that they, too, will do their share in enhancing awareness about our coastal resources, either through print, broadcast and other media.

In case you need any related information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

—CHUA THIA-ENG,
regional programme director,

Partnerships in Environment Management for the Seas of East Asia,
c/o Department of Environment and Natural Resources
(DENR) Compound,
Visayas Avenue,
Quezon City

Villaram's inconsistency

THE EXPOSÉ of Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama on the alleged $2-million bribery of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, based on "unverified information coming from reliable sources," baffles me. Isn't he the same congressman who stood up in Congress to defend a Comelec commissioner accused of a "verified and well-documented charges" coming from very reliable NGOs? Now he wants his peers to investigate this "unverified information" after he voted to dismiss the "verified and well-documented charges" against the Comelec commissioner.

This all politics!

—COL. BEN M. PAGUIRIGAN JR., PA
(Ret.) Sta. Catalina, Zamboanga City

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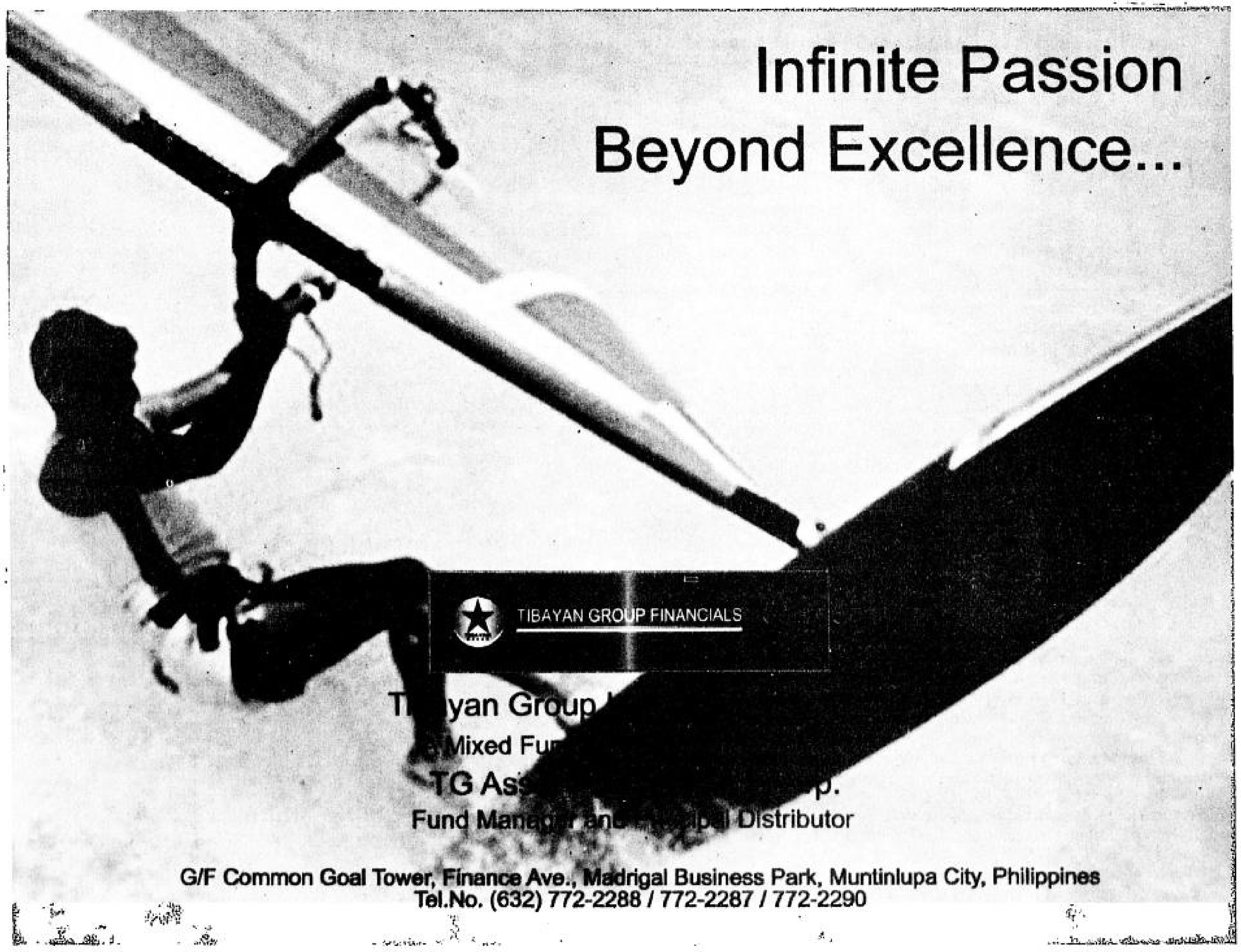

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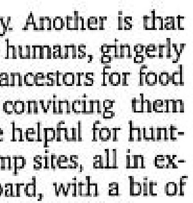
Asian dogs

I WAS desperate, somehow unable to make the mad dash, as the Thais were doing, across one of Bangkok's busy highways. As the vehicles sped past me at a thousand miles a minute, I thought glumly: I'm doomed, marooned to spend the rest of my life on the wrong side of the highway.

PINOY KASI



Michael L. Tan

Then I noticed about 50 meters away from me a grizzled old Assoi, sitting on the sidewalk watching the traffic. Let me explain: "Assoi" is a term I coined out of the Tagalog *aso*, for dog and the Thai *soi*, which means a small street or alley. In other words, "Assoi" would be the equivalent of our "Askal" (from *asong kalye*).

I suddenly realized Assoi wasn't just idly sitting there. He was preparing to cross, his sights set, even knowing which direction to look. Suddenly our eyes met and he smiled, giving me a look that said: "Hey kiddo, what's your problem? I do this a hundred times a day."

So when he started to cross, I followed. No, he didn't dash across the highway like people did. He walked, head high up in the air, confident and nonchalant. The cars, vans, trucks, even Ford Expeditions, slowed down for him—and for me.

We made it to the island in the middle of the highway, where he decided, well, to mark his latest crossing, a tree here, a tree there. Oh Assoi, I thought, must you be so macho about all this? Oh Pinoy, he seemed to be talking back, must you be so impatient?

To make a long story short, we eventually made it to the other side of the highway. I thanked him, in Thai of course (*kop khun khap*), and went my way while marvelling at the wonders of dog evolution, as well as dog-people co-evolution, in Asia.

I'm not surprised a genetics study from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, published in the Nov. 22 issue of Science, suggests our modern dog, *Canis familiaris*, may have originated in East Asia.

The Swedish team, headed by Peter Savolainen, compared DNA from several hundred dogs from all over the world and found there was much more diversity among the dogs from China, Thailand, Cambodia, Tibet, Korea and Japan when compared to those from Europe, West Asia, Africa and Arctic America. This genetic diversity suggests that the dogs have been around in those East and Southeast Asian countries much longer, giving more time for all that variation to emerge.

The scientists were looking at mitochondrial DNA, which is transmitted through females. Based on the comparisons of DNA of dogs and wolves, the Swedes further speculated that the "canine Eves" in East Asia date back about 15,000 years. Around that time, it seems that East Asians were able to domesticate wolves.

Well, that's one theory. Another is that the wolves domesticated humans, gingerly approaching our hunter ancestors for food scraps and eventually convincing them they could be even more helpful for hunting and for guarding camp sites, all in exchange for room and board, with a bit of human affection thrown into the deal.

Travelling around Asia, I find that dogs have retained a lifestyle halfway between domestication and the feral state, with varying degrees depending on the culture. The street dogs in the Philippines are a skinny, mangy lot that's suspicious of—even hostile to—people. All for good reason considering how they're beaten up, kicked around and slaughtered for *pulutan*.

In contrast, Thai street dogs are well fed and look quite fit. They're generally friendlier with people, which suggests they are treated well. Yet they do maintain some distance, almost as if they want to retain their independence, tending to favor the company of other dogs rather than people. The evolution of East Asian dogs was pretty much left to natural selection, unlike in Western countries where more than a hundred breeds were developed by humans, selectively choosing traits such as hairlessness or long bodies.

My highway friend shows, too, how dogs can adapt to life in large cities, sometimes doing better with traffic than people. I suspect they think of the cars as extra large and extra fast elephants, but they are not about to be intimidated.

No doubt, life for East and Southeast Asian dogs can be harsh, perhaps even more so than for the wolves in the wild. In many Asian countries, dogs are considered food—in Chinese cities you'll find restaurants advertising dogmeat, while in Korea dog soup is considered a potent tonic.

But everywhere, too, in this genetic homeland for dogs, *Canis familiaris* provides companionship for humans. Observe the street dogs carefully and you'll find they reserve their affections for particular people, remaining loyal to the most abusive of owners.

How did dogs spread out from Asia to the world? It's believed they accompanied humans who, several thousands of years ago, crossed over from northern Asia into the Americas, via the Bering Straits. That took several generations of people and dogs, braving the most difficult of terrains and the harshest weather.

From my Thai highway experience, I think you can imagine who lead whom in that historic trek out of Asia.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Kidnap cases down; car, bank thefts up, says PNP

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOOD news is kidnapping cases dipped by at least 30 percent this year. The bad news is car thefts and bank robberies rose slightly, Philippine National Police records showed.

Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, attributed the decline in kidnap for ransom cases to the neutralization of six criminal syndicates by Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) operatives.

Pacer replaced the Presidential Anti-Organize Crime Task Force of the Estrada administration.

The PNP statistics showed 62 kidnap for ransom cases were reported in the first three quarters of the year, down 31.9 percent from the 91 abductions recorded in the same period last year.

The records also showed a 43 percent drop in kidnap cases in Metro Manila, where less than a third of the 62 incidents occurred but where most kidnapping syndicates operate.

Pacer has neutralized six of 21 known kidnap gangs in two months of operation, the records showed.

On the flip side, car thefts and bank robberies rose slightly during the first three quarters, the records indicated.

Reported car thefts totaled 2,214 as of October, up 12.4 percent from the 1,969 cases recorded in the same period last year.

Bank robberies went up by 37 percent from 27 in the first three quarters last year to 37 in the same period this year, the records also showed.

The total volume of crimes reported from January to October stood at 73,496, up 13.3 percent from the 64,860 reported in the same period last year, Bataoil said.

Compensation for LaoagAir victims

A COMPENSATION package is being prepared for families of the 19 peoplewho were killed and 15 others who were injured in the Laoag International Airlines plane crash early this month.

LaoagAir chair Paul Ng said the company and its Australian insurer, Heath Lamber, were finalizing details of the package.

"We have not abandoned our basicmoral and financial responsibility to the victims," Ng said.

The Fokker 27 passenger plane crashed into Manila Bay on Nov. 11, killing 19, including six Australians and three Britons. Fifteen were rescued, including the two pilots, who claimed the airplane's engines had stalled.

Initial investigation showed the pilots may have also failed to follow prescribed pre-flight procedures.

The plane's black box, or flight data recorder, was recovered four days later, but it yielded no information whatsoever on the doomed Flight 585. *AFP*

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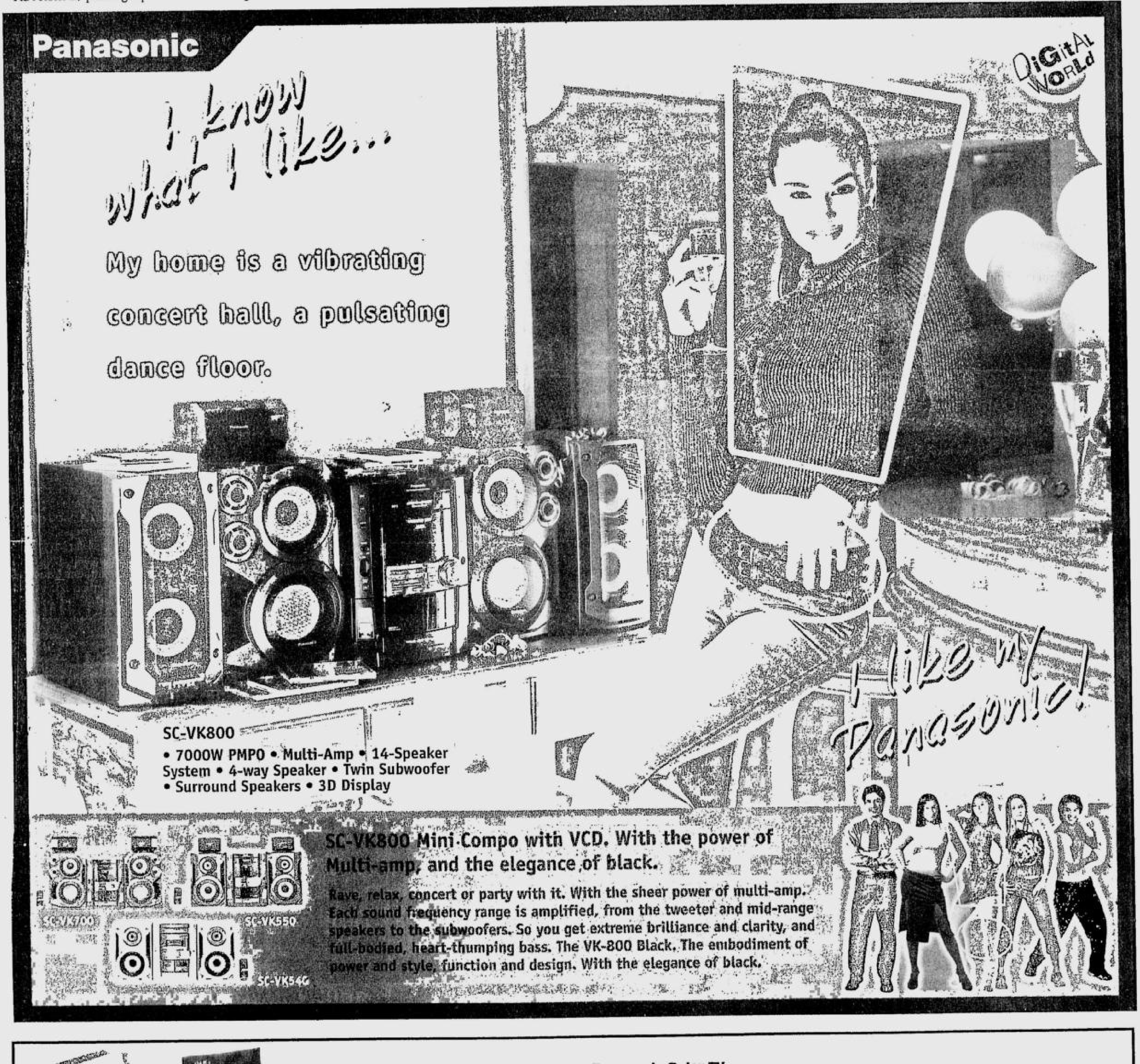

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UN inspectors start hunt for banned Iraqi weapons

BAGHDAD—UN inspectors drove to a military compound east of Baghdad on Wednesday at the start of their hunt for banned Iraqi weapons of mass destruction after a four-year gap.

The start of inspections marks the countdown to a Dec. 8 deadline for Baghdad to declare any nuclear, chemical or biological weapons in an initial report to the United Nations Security Council, with the threat of a US-led attack looming.

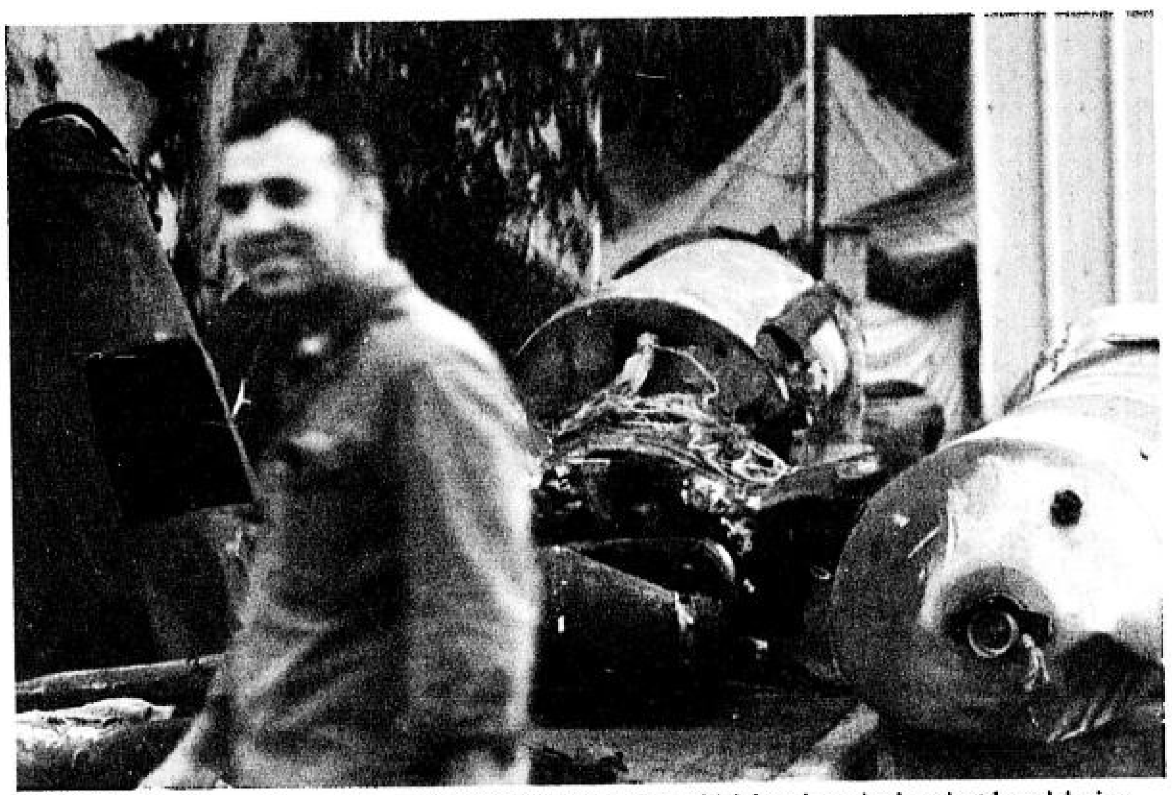
Iraq denies having any such weapons. But given Washington's conviction that Iraq does indeed have them, US President George W. Bush has warned that Iraq's President Saddam Hussein would be entering his "final stage" if he were to stick to such a blanket denial.

About an hour after the inspectors left on their first mission at 8:30 a.m., air raid sirens sounded over Baghdad, followed by the all-clear some 10 minutes later.

An Iraqi civil defense official said Western planes had flown over the capital, triggering the alert.

In London, a Defense Ministry spokesperson denied there had been any Western air activity in the area. "I can confirm there has been no coalition air activity in the region," he said.

Baghdad is just north of a southern "no-fly" zone routinely patrolled by US and British planes. In the past, sirens have sounded in Baghdad when the planes attacked on the edge of the zone in response to what they say is Iraqi anti-aircraft fire.



AN ISRAELI soldier walks next to parts of Iraqi Scud missiles which Iraq launched against Israel during the 1991 Gulf War, in an Air Force base in central Israel, Nov. 26. AP

Inspectors left their headquarters in the old Canal Hotel on the southeastern outskirts of Baghdad in a convoy of eight white-painted vehicles, escorted by officials of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate and an ambulance.

The convoy headed east from the Iraqi capital just on 8:30 a.m. and drove around 20 km to a large military compound guarded by troops. Reporters were barred from entering the site.

"I think everybody feels excited and anxious to get going and very determined to start this systematic inspection," spokesperson Melissa Fleming said.

"We are just hopeful that things will go well today. We are looking forward to a good day of inspection," she told reporters as the inspectors left the hotel where they are staying to go to their headquarters before their day's work.

The inspectors gave up their post-Gulf War quest in 1998 in the face of Iraqi obstruction—notably over access to numerous "presidential sites."

This time, with the tougher mandate of Security Council Resolution 1441, they say the president's sprawling personal domains will no longer be off-limits.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan reminded Iraq on Tuesday that failure to cooperate could trigger a US-led attack.

"I believe war is avoidable," he told France's Le Monde newspaper. "It is avoidable if President Saddam Hussein honors his commitments made at the United Nations and cooperates fully with the inspectors." *Reuters*

Bali blasts suspect admits knowing top al-Qaida operative

JAKARTA—The alleged mastermind of the Bali bombing has admitted he knows wanted international terrorist Hambali, who is accused of being a leading al-Qaida operative, Indonesian police said Wednesday.

Hambali, an Indonesian whose real name is Riduan Isamuddin and who is being hunted by five governments, is suspected of being operations chief of Southeast Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiah (JI) and a leading member of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Police have said they believe he left Indonesia for Pakistan.

National police chief General Da'i Bachtiar said Samudra, who was arrested last Thursday while trying to flee Indonesia's main island, previously denied knowing Hambali "but after we showed him evidence, he admitted knowing him."

Bachtiar told reporters he expected Samudra to make further admissions.

National police detective chief Erwin Mappaseng said Samudra and Hambali were neighbors when they were both living in Malaysia.

"But apart from being neighbors, we still don't know the nature of their relationship," Mappaseng said.

According to Rohan Gunaratna, author of Inside al-Qaida, Hambali is the group's highest ranking agent in the region.

Gunaratna said Hambali was now al-Qaida's pointman for Southeast Asia and a member of the group's shura (consultative council).

JI is suspected of involvement in the Bali terror blast, which killed more than 190 people when it ripped through crowded nightspots on the resort island on Oct. 12.

Bachtiar has earlier described Samudra, 32, as JI's chief operative in Indonesia.

Amrozi, the Indonesian mechanic arrested on Nov. 5 in the first break in the multinational investigation, is also said to know Hambali.

Police say both Samudra and Amrozi have admitted they staged the blast to slaughter westerners and avenge perceived injustices against Muslims.

Investigators have also found evidence of a suicide bomber called Iqbal in Bali—the first time this technique has been used in Indonesia—and four others who had formed a pact to die with him if necessary.

Australian Federal Police commissioner Mick Keelty said in Canberra the pact had been formed as a show of commitment to Samudra.

Keelty said the four were in custody and include an Indonesian called Agus who was arrested this week.

Iqbal is believed to have detonated a smaller blast in Paddy's Bar on a popular tourist strip in the resort of Kuta. The apparent aim was to drive people into the street, where a huge van exploded seconds later outside the nearby Sari club.

Keelty said DNA samples obtained from Iqbal's mother were on their way to federal police headquarters in Australia for analysis. *AFP*

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Did you know? Effective August 1, 2002, Mabuhay Miles replaces both PALsmiles and Mabuhay Club as Philippine Airlines' integrated frequent flyer program. Existing members will be transferred to their corresponding membership levels (Elite, Premier Elite or Million Miler) and receive new membership cards by mail.

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US urges Saudi to 'do more' to fight terror

WASHINGTON—The United States urged Saudi Arabia Tuesday to step up the fight to starve terrorists of funds but denied that it was mulling an ultimatum to Riyadh over alleged terror financing by Saudi nationals.

"Saudi Arabia is a good partner in the war on terrorism but good partners can do more," said White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer, who confirmed that a US government working group was mulling ways to enhance Riyahd's efforts.

"The United States' job is to work with the government of Saudi Arabia to push them to do more to take a look at everything that can be effective," the spokesperson said.

Earlier, the Washington Post reported that a National Security Council task force was urging President George W. Bush to adopt a plan to pressure Riyadh into cracking down on alleged terrorism financing by Saudi nationals.

The initiative would deliver an ultimatum to Riyahd: Put suspected terrorist financiers out of business within 90 days or face unilateral US action to bring the suspects to justice, the daily said, citing senior US officials.

Senior officials told the daily that Washington's first step would be to present intelligence and evidence against individuals and businesses suspected of financing al-Qaida or other terrorist organizations.

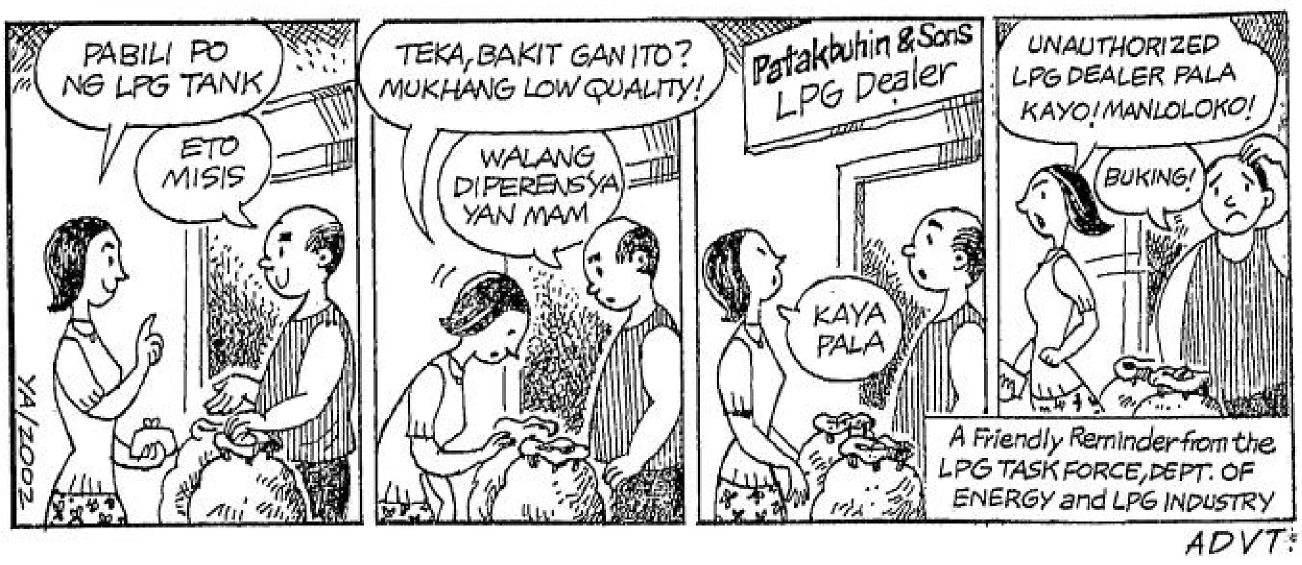
The United States would demand that Saudi Arabia take action against them, and tell the Saudis: "We don't care how you deal with the problem; just do it or we will."

Senior US officials also told the daily that US intelligence agencies have compiled a list of nine wealthy individuals—seven Saudis, one Pakistani and one Egyptian—believed to be the core financiers for Islamic terrorist groups including Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

"There is no substance to those reports, and I have no knowledge of any such study which results in the conclusion that we should issue such ultimatums or take unilateral action," said Powell. "We have a good relationship."

The top US diplomat said Riyadh shared Washington's concerns over the fact that 15 of the 19 hijackers who used jetliners as missiles in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist strikes came from Saudi Arabia.

"We should not, in our concern, and in our desire to protect ourselves, go to the point where we rupture relations with a country that has been a good friend of the United States for many, many years, and is a strategic partner," said Powell. *AFP*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Canada PM aide who called Bush 'moron' quits

OTTAWA—The top aide to Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien who called US President George W. Bush a "moron" resigned on Tuesday, saying the controversy generated by the comment had made her position untenable.

Francoise Ducros, Chretien's communications director, had been under intense pressure from opposition politicians and the media since making the remark last Wednesday during a conversation with journalists during a Nato summit in Prague.

She first offered her resignation last Friday but Chretien refused to accept it, saying the remarks had been private. But on Tuesday she sent Chretien a letter saying she was quitting.

"It is very apparent to me that the controversy will make it impossible for me to do my job. I would therefore like to leave my position as director of communications immediately," wrote Ducros, who had been in the post since mid-1999.

Ducros, a 40-year-old lawyer known for her combative and often abrasive manner, showed undying loyalty to Chretien and was considered one of the most influential players in Ottawa.

"I'm very sorry. She was very good, a very competent person and served me and served the government extremely well, and I wish her good luck," Chretien told reporters. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

2 Palestinian leaders killed

JENIN—Two top Palestinian militant commanders were killed in an explosion in a Jenin refugee camp that witnesses said was caused by a missile fired by an Israeli warplane.

The deaths of Ala'a Sabbagh of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and Imad Nasharti of the Izz el-Deen al-Qassam brigades on Tuesday night raised the specter of a surge in Israeli-Palestinian violence on the eve of a pre-election leadership ballot in Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ruling Likud party.

But their deaths could also give Sharon a boost among members of the right-wing Likud two days before the leadership vote in which his more hawkish Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is challenging him. *Reuters*

Arab gov'ts warn US

WASHINGTON—Arab governments would curtail their cooperation with the United States in the US "war on terrorism" if the United States attacks Iraq, a senior Yemeni official said on Tuesday.

"I can't imagine that war in Iraq will allow any country to go about the war against terrorism as business as usual," said Abdul-Karim al-Iryani, a former Yemeni prime minister and senior adviser to President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

"It will negatively affect the cooperation of almost every other Arab country, at least during the war. After the war, maybe people will come back," Iryani told reporters. *Reuters*

Industrial unrest in Europe

LONDON—Industrial unrest gripped western Europe on Tuesday as striking transport workers, teachers and firefighters made travellers' lives a misery and gave hundreds of thousands of students a day off.

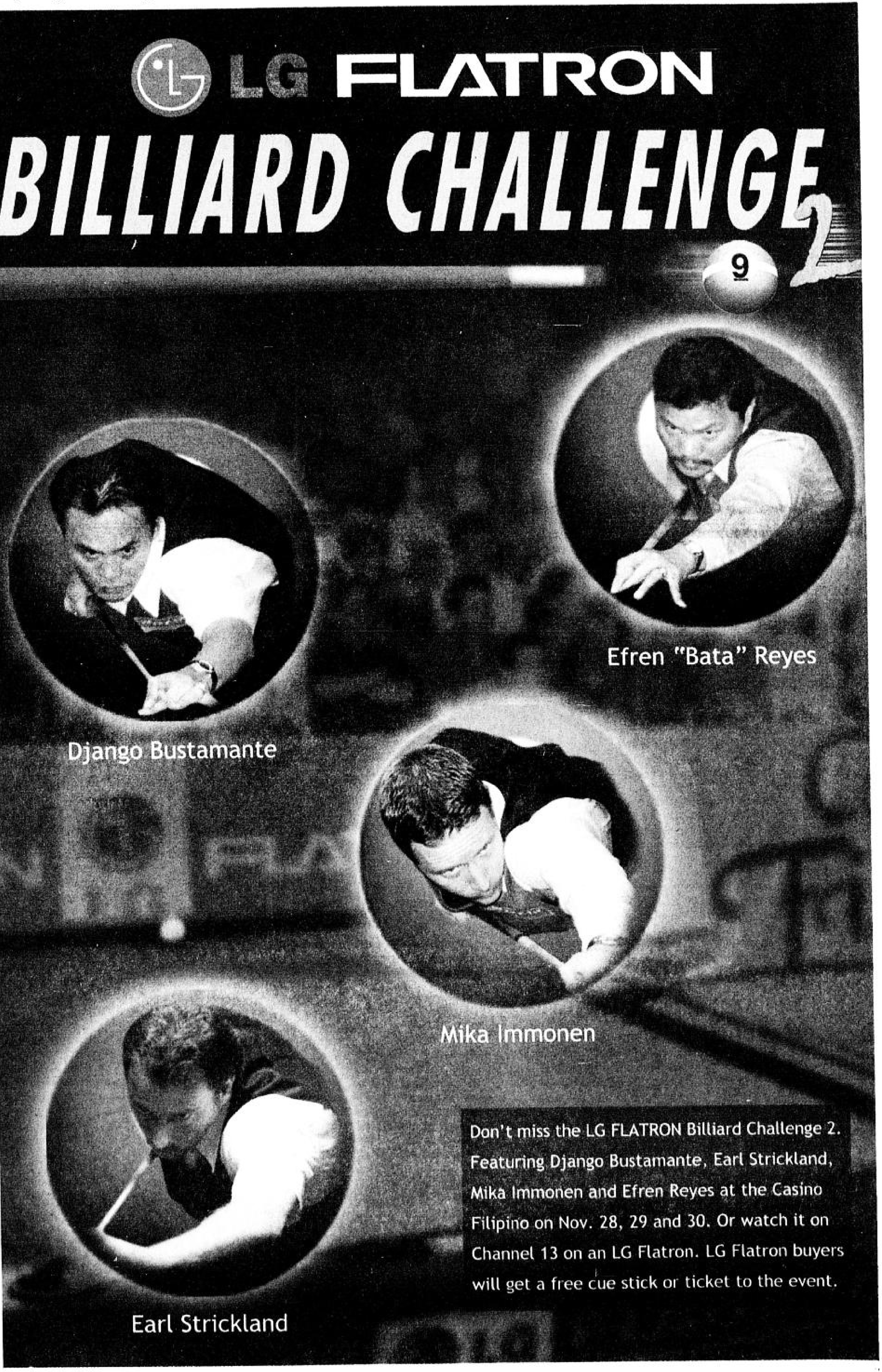
Disgruntled workers took to the streets of Paris and London to air grievances ranging from pay to plans for economic reform. The skies over the French capital were unusually quiet as barely one in five flights went ahead.

Europe's current wave of industrial protest has also affected Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Italy, where thousands have marched in protest at plans to axe 8,100 workers at car maker, Fiat.

As well as crippling flights into and out of France, a walkout by air controllers caused disruption across the continent as flights were diverted to avoid French airspace.

Train commuters had to walk the last 250-meter stretch of their journey into Paris's central Gare du Nord station due to action by rail staff, who joined tens of thousands of workers angry at right-wing government proposals to step-up privatization and overhaul the state pension system. A day earlier, traditionally militant French truckers had erected roadblocks in a pay dispute.

In Britain, Prime Minister Tony Blair came under mounting pressure over his handling of a strike by firefighters, and London teachers joined the ranks of increasingly militant public sector workers. *Reuters*



Don't miss the LG FLATRON Billiard Challenge 2. Featuring Django Bustamante, Earl Strickland, Mika Immonen and Efren Reyes at the Casino Filipino on Nov. 28, 29 and 30. Or watch it on Channel 13 on an LG Flatron. LG Flatron buyers will get a free cue stick or ticket to the event.

SCHEDULE OF MATCHES:

November 28 - Matches start at 4:00 PM
- Bustamante vs. Immonen
  Telecast: 5:00 - 6:30 pm
- Reyes vs. Strickland
  Telecast: 9:30 - 11:30 pm

November 29 - Matches start at 1:00 PM
- Reyes vs. Immonen
  Telecast: 2:30 - 4:30 pm
- Bustamante vs. Strickland
  Telecast: 9:30 - 11:30 pm

November 30 - Matches start at 2:00 PM
- Celebrity Match, Race to 5 - Vergel Meneses vs. Manny Pacquiao
  Telecast: 3:30 - 4:30 pm
- Battle for Third, Race to 9
  Telecast: 6:00 - 8:00 pm
- Finals
  Telecast: 9:00 - 11:30 pm

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Southcom chief opposed to ceasefire

ZAMBOANGA CITY—There is no need to declare a ceasefire with various rebel groups in Mindanao during the Yuletide season, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya said yesterday.

"What is the point of stopping military operations when we are surrounded by so many threat groups who will do their activities with impunity? They (rebel groups) do not also want to share with us the spirit of the holidays," Abaya said.

When asked if a ceasefire was needed in Mindanao, the military officer said: "Maybe I would not recommend a (ceasefire)."

The Southcom chief said all rebel groups were just taking advantage of the military's unilateral ceasefire, "to conduct atrocities against the soldiers and against the civilians."

And if the peace and order situation in Mindanao worsens, Abaya said he will have no other choice but to cancel the government soldiers' Christmas break.

"If the activities of the different threat groups continued to rise, then it's possible that we will not be going on a Christmas or New Year's break," Abaya said.

But in Davao City, the city mayor, Rodrigo Duterte, said he wanted to have a peaceful co-existence with communist and Moro rebels and will declare a ceasefire for the holiday season.

"For all purposes—I go to the mountains in the spirit of goodwill and they (rebels) can come down from the mountains to celebrate Christmas with their relatives," he said.

Duterte said a ceasefire with communist and Moro rebels would help him visit these areas with no serious threats to his safety along the way.

The reaction of the mayor came on the heels of report that a police general has urged Malacañang not to declare a holiday truce with the New People's Army (NPA).

Reports said the police would always regard the NPA rebels as terrorists.

For many years, the government declares a unilateral ceasefire with the rebels for the holiday celebration.

But Duterte said he does not want to deviate from his usual practice in visiting rebel-influenced areas during the Christmas season.

"The military should know that," he said.

Duterte said he always understood the position of the military and the police, but for elected officials like him, talks with revolutionaries would still be the preferred position rather than going to war.

Davao City, however, continued to be on alert following reports that a terrorist group is out to launch bomb attacks in the city.

Senior Supt. Conrado Laza, city police chief, said more uniformed and non-uniformed personnel were deployed to populated places like department stores, churches, markets to watch over the safety of the populace.

Duterte called for an emergency meeting with police officials Monday afternoon allegedly to discuss the threats.

Duterte has appealed to the group to spare the city.

The mayor's call came after an improvised explosive device was discovered at the crowded Gaisano Mall along J.P. Laurel Avenue on Sunday afternoon.

Before the discovery, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) received a phone call that a bomb was allegedly planted inside the mall. *Julie Alipala and Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

1 more bus passenger dies in Baguio hospital

Site where bus fell off said to be accident-prone

BAGUIO CITY—One more passenger of the bus which fell off a 20-meter ravine in Pugo, La Union, on Tuesday died at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center here.

Dr. Manuel Factora, BGHMC director, said Jerico Obra, 18, of Damortis, La Union, died while undergoing surgery for injuries in his neck and chest on Tuesday night.

Obra's death brought to two the fatalities in Tuesday's accident. Passenger Margarita Beltran, 73, of Binmaley, Pangasinan, died while being taken to the BGHMC.

The Dagupan City-bound Victory Liner Bus which left this city at 4:45 p.m. was carrying at least 52 passengers, most of them residents of Pangasinan and La Union. It met the accident at about 5:30 p.m. near the giant Marcos bust.

Injured

At least 43 passengers were hurt and taken to the BGHMC and Saint Louis University Hospital. They were discharged from the hospitals also on Tuesday night.

Police said the driver, Danilo Mendoza, lost control of the vehicle when its steering wheel malfunctioned while the bus was negotiating a sharp curve in Barangay Palina, Pugo. As the bus skidded, its front tire burst and caused the bus to fall off the ravine.

Rogelio Ortega, Victory Liner general manager here, said the passengers were insured for P50,000 each. He said the bus firm would pay for the victims' hospital expenses that would exceed the amount covered by insurance.

Bus No. 120

The Victory Liner bus No. 120 left Baguio City shortly after 4:45 p.m. for Dagupan. It was negotiating the rain-soaked Marcos Highway at about 5:30 p.m. when its front tire burst, skidded and plunged into the ravine shortly after passing the view deck of the Marcos Park.

The site at Barangay Palina is an accident-prone area, police said. Witnesses said several accidents had taken place there in the past.

Heavy rains hampered rescuers from immediately retrieving bodies of victims from the fallen bus.

The accident came three days after a Bicol-bound bus plunged down a 30-foot ravine in the mountain town of Tagkawayan in Quezon Sunday morning, killing 33 people. *Jovelyn Reyes and Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

DEAD end for the ill-fated Victory Liner bus at the bottom of a ravine that has seen dozens of accidents, many of them fatal, in the past.

TOOTS SOBERANO

PMA execs deny hazing despite conviction of 2 for death of cadet

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Despite the first court convictions of two former Philippine Military Academy cadets for a hazing death, the academy's top officials said the trial's documented testimony about a "hazing tradition" in the PMA were all "imaginary."

Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent, said expelled Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong and Michael Perang invoked a hazing tradition as their defense in the trial for the death of Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo last year.

"What the convicted cadets did (to Domingo and three other cadets) was what they thought was their own way of disciplining a cadet. Their own way was (inspired by) their own imagination. There is not such thing in the academy as a procedure (for hazing)," Adan told the INQUIRER.

The 18-page ruling of Judge Ruben Ayson of the regional trial court here detailed the PMA "yearling tradition" of "kabog (punching)" and "hataw (whipping)," which Ong and Perang did to Domingo which resulted in his death.

Defense lawyers Jose Molintas and Noe Villanueva presented Ayson with testimonies from active military personnel, who confirmed the existence of hazing inside PMA.

"Whatever the courts documented came from the cadets themselves and not something that the academy practices . . . There is no ritual of harming a yearling. When (hazing is applied) by a cadet, when he abuses his authority, it is entirely (his initiative)," Adan said.

"Hazing per se is maltreatment. This happens not only in the academy but in other institutions as well, where there are organized initiation rites. In PMA, we don't have organized maltreatment. (Ong's and Perang's cases) are exceptions."

Adan said the academy was "unhappy" that Ong and Perang were penalized last week with a reduced homicide sentence, rather than the original murder charge that was being heard by Ayson.

Domingo and four other cadets were lined up for beatings in March last year as an underground rite of passage for successfully passing their academic courses.

Domingo used to be part of Ong's and Perang's class, but was turned back for a year due to failing grades.

On the week of his beatings, Domingo was up for promotion to cadet third class.

Adan said the graduating Class of 2003 was satisfied with the hazing convictions.

"(The ruling) was justice for the victim who was supposed to be (part of this year's) graduating class. It was justice for the class," he said.

"(Ong and Perang) are two intelligent young men who were chosen from thousands of men and women to be future leaders of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Adan said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

5 NPA camps discovered in Ecija, Aurora border

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—At least five New People's Army camps, believed to be serving as communist schools, were discovered in the shared boundaries of Nueva Ecija and Aurora last week, an Army official said on Tuesday.

A special patrol unit under the 702nd Infantry Brigade found the camps in the middle of the Sierra Madre, said Col. Jovenal Narcise, brigade chief.

Narcise said the camps, which were abandoned by the NPA, are accessible through Barangay Labi in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija. Two main camps straddle the boundaries and are complemented by a network of three smaller camps.

Located in forested areas and built along hidden river tributaries, the camps are hardly noticed from the air or on the ground and are not depicted in military and topographical maps, Narcise said.

The camps, he noted, could accommodate more than 100 people.

Narcise said there were indications that the camps were used by the NPA during summer months for military training and exposure programs of activists in Metro Manila and Central Luzon.

Narcise said 702nd IB soldiers located the camps based on details obtained from the 1949 ambush on the group of Doña Aurora Quezon along the route from Barangay Labi to Baler, Aurora.

Narcise said Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan commander Paulino Viernes alias Stalin, who was believed responsible for the ambush, held camp in the same area.

"It is believed that the camps of the Huks are still the same camps that are being used by the communist (rebels) today," Narcise said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cop who took hostage nabbed

CAMP DANGWA, La Trinidad, Benguet—A policeman was arrested by his colleagues after he took a passenger of a bus hostage along the Marcos Highway on Tuesday afternoon.

Reports said PO2 Paulo Manis, who was riding a Victory Liner bus bound for Baguio City, drew his .45 cal. pistol and grabbed a 14-year-old passenger identified as Ben Binmano.

He then pointed his gun at the other passengers, causing panic in the bus.

Senior Supt. Elpidio Gabriel, spokesperson of the Cordillera police, said Gabriel said Manis drew his gun a few minutes after he boarded the bus along the Marcos Highway in Barangay Taloy Norte in Tuba town.

When the commotion started, Gabriel said bus driver Hayten Oklima decided to proceed to a makeshift station of the police's regional traffic management group (RTMG) along the highway to seek help.

When the bus stopped, RTMG agents immediately boarded and arrested Manis. No passenger was reported hurt, police said. *Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Jaworski bodyguards beat up hotel guard

DAVAO CITY—Sen. Robert Jaworski's security escorts beat up a guard of the Waterfront Insular Hotel in Lanang, Sasa District here early Saturday over security procedures.

Jaworski was in the city for a speaking engagement over the weekend.

Bernard Tabaransa, Waterfront's chief security officer, on Sunday told radio station dxMF here that there were witnesses who saw the beating but that the hotel management was still in the process of getting their statements.

Tabaransa said based on the report of hotel guard Agpi Pigan, he was manning the main gate of the hotel's compound around 1 a.m. when he flagged down four incoming vehicles tailing each other.

Checking on incoming vehicles is a normal procedure followed by the establishment's security guards in the wake of bombings in various parts of the country.

Tabaransa said as soon as the vehicles grounded to a halt, several men got off.

One of them allegedly whipped Pigan thrice in the head with a .45 cal. pistol.

Tabaransa said based on Pigan's report the escorts were reeking with liquor. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FPJ meeting with Lapid fuels 2004 speculations

PORAC, Pampanga—Action star Fernando Poe Jr., with fellow actor Robin Padilla in tow, dropped by Gov. Manuel Lapid's house here on Monday, fueling speculations that Poe was soliciting the governor's support for his supposed presidential candidacy in 2004.

But Lapid quickly dispelled reports that Poe was wooing him for the supposed bid to beat President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2004.

"Both of them (Poe and Padilla) happened to be shooting their respective films in Porac's lahar areas (in Barangay Mancatian). So they decided to come together to my house," Lapid, also an action star, said.

Poe and Padilla, he said, joined him for lunch after learning that Porac, Lapid's hometown was celebrating its fiesta on Monday.

"There was nothing political in their coming, nothing of that sort," Lapid told the INQUIRER.

Local reporters having lunch at Lapid's house said they never saw Poe and Lapid talk in private. The two, they added, stayed all throughout at the mini-pavilion where the governor set out a feast of seafood.

Poe avoided reporters and was said to have simply let out a smile when asked about his political plans.

Poe and Lapid talked about their respective entries to the Metro Manila Film Festival next month.

Poe, dubbed as the "King of Philippine Movies," calls Lapid "Ato" while Lapid calls Poe, his mentor, "Tatay (Father)."

Lapid's father, Jose, served as assistant cameraman of Poe's late father.

The governor had said that although he belonged to the ruling Lakas-NUCD, he could not sever his personal ties with Poe.

"Our ties are deep," he said.

But in the 2004 race, Lapid said he would follow the decision of his party on its official candidates.

He said he could differentiate friendship and politics. "*Iba ang pagiging mag-tatay namin, ang pagiging magkaibigan namin. Hiwalay yun sa pulitika* (Our relationship as father and son, our friendship, is different. That's outside politics)," Lapid said.

Lapid was quoted as having said he would be put in a bind should Poe decide to run in the 2004 elections.

Although he was loyal to President Macapagal, being the President's party mate, Lapid was quoted as saying he owed a lot to the action star.

Rumors refused to die down that Poe was running for President after the successful bid of his close friend, jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

5, 3 of them kids, die in ₱20M fire in Leyte

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

DULAG, Leyte—Five persons, three of them children, were killed while two firemen were wounded early yesterday in a fire that gutted down the public market of Dulag town, Leyte.

About P20 million worth of property was destroyed by the fire, which was considered as the biggest to hit the town in 20 years.

SFO4 Arturo de Veyra, municipal fire chief, identified the fatalities as Maria Gualberto, 45 and son Marlon, 5; sister-in-law Melitona Verona, 43 and her sons Paulo, 4 and Rommel, 2.

The victims were sleeping inside the family-owned Am's store when the fire, triggered by a short-circuit in a refrigerator, broke out at about 2:05 a.m.

"They were all trapped inside their stall," said SFO2 Melchor Lopez, officer-on-case.

He said Maria's housemaid Mary Jean Daguinot, 15; and daughter Mary as well as Melitona's daughters Jerica, 8 and Jolyvel, 6; managed to escape from the raging fire.

Aside from the Dulag fire station, fire trucks from the nearby towns of Palo, Tolosa and Abuyog as well as from Tacloban City, responded to the fire alarm.

But the fire quickly spread that by time the fire trucks arrived, four stalls had already burned down.

After an hour and 25 minutes, eight buildings, which housed 68 stalls, were razed to the ground.

Two firemen were also wounded while trying to put out the fire. They were FO3 Edwin Astorga and FO2 Babiano Canas of the Buraeun fire station.

"The conflagration (was) the biggest to hit Dulag in more than 20 years," said De Veyra.

Dulag Vice Mayor Montano Labadia said the municipal government would release P1.5 million from the calamity fund to be given as assistance to the fire victims.

The Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office also gave P50,000 to the families of the fatalities, he added.

Magno Gualberto, 47, was inconsolable upon seeing the charred bodies of his wife Maria, his young son, his sister and two nephews.

"I am devastated and shocked. The last time I saw them alive was last Sunday when we had lunch together at our stall," Magno told the INQUIRER.

"I'll be celebrating the Christmas without them," he said, sobbing.

Magno said he was in their house in Barangay San Agustin, about seven kilometers away from the public market, when his friend informed him about the fire.

He said he immediately rushed to the market because he knew his wife, sister Melitona and their children had spent the night inside their stall.

"But I cannot do anything more to rescue my family. I was too late," he bewailed.

ROUNDUP

Fire hits ecozone

CEBU CITY—Fire yesterday damaged three offices inside a commercial building at the Mactan Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) II in Barangay Basak, Lapulapu City, Mactan Island, Cebu. Supt. Esmael Codilla, Lapulapu City fire marshal, said that at about 6:55 a.m., fire broke out inside the conference room of Eva Brokerage Inc. located on the second floor of NGA Building after a computer overheated. The fire spread to other offices on the second floor. These were the Philippine Enter Team and a dental clinic. The fire was put under control after two minutes. Damage to property was pegged at P600,000. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Abuses ordered probed

CEBU CITY—The Commission on Human Rights, acting on a complaint lodged by a US-based group, directed the CHR in Central Visayas to investigate alleged abuses committed against a civilian by members of the Army's 78th Infantry Battalion based in Danao City, Cebu. Dr. Felix Razon, secretary of the Philippines Cultural Studies Center based in Storrs, Connecticut, USA asked CHR to look into physical assault, strafing and several abuses committed in October by soldiers that forced evacuation of the residents. The 78th IB had earlier denied the accusations amid charges initiated by local farmers and militant groups. *Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Alert for bomb experts

DAVAO CITY—Police in Compostela Valley were on the lookout for at least two bomb experts from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front who reportedly arrived in Maco town amid reports of a bombing plot. Chief Insp. Warlito Tampo, spokesperson of the Southern Mindanao police office, said the suspects were repeatedly seen at the residence of Commander Salem in Barangay Madaum in nearby Tagum City this month. Salem's name had earlier been linked with explosions in Southern Mindanao. But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, denied any bombing plot. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

New PNP Cavite director

CAMP GEN. GARCIA, Imus, Cavite—Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales assumed his post as the new director of the Cavite Police Office during a turnover ceremony in Tagaytay City Monday. Outgoing police chief Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao Jr., who relinquished his post to Rosales, will be assigned to Camp Crame as deputy director for legal service of the Philippine National Police. Rosales is a 1978 Philippine Military Academy graduate and outgoing Quezon police director prior to his Cavite assignment. *Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Illegal lumber seized

LEGAZPI CITY—Police in Naga City intercepted and seized an Isuzu truck loaded with 709 pieces of semi-furnished lumber with a volume of 9,957 board feet. The truck was driven by a certain Danilo Ocenar, 42, resident of Barangay Canlapwas, Catbalogan, Western Samar. With him were co-driver, Benjamin Tamor, 25, and resident of Barangay San Juan, Tarangnan, Samar and three female passengers. Documents obtained from the driver, stated that the lumber came from Avenue Lumberyard in Catbalogan, Samar and was to be delivered to Banson Lumber in Meycauayan, Bulacan. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Teacher killed in fire

ORION, Bataan—A teacher was killed after her house was gutted by fire in Barangay Villa Angeles here on Saturday night. Police identified the victim as Myrna Pangilinan, 57, a teacher at the Orion Central Elementary School here. Reports said Pangilinan was sleeping in her room when the fire broke out. Investigators said the bulbs of Pangilinan's Christmas lights overheated and started the fire. *Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Ugalde, 80

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Former Philippine Military Academy superintendent, retired Brig. Gen. Aurelio Ugalde, died on Friday due to a lingering illness. He was 80. Ugalde, a native of Santiago, Ilocos Sur, and member of PMA Class 1944, was the PMA superintendent when communist rebels led by Victor Corpus raided the PMA armory in 1970. "We remember him as a fatherly person, an academician and a conscientious officer," said Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bomb suspect goes to police

STA. CRUZ, Ilocos Sur—After learning that he was charged with murder on Tuesday in connection with a bomb attack here last week, a businessman based in Ilocos Norte went to the local police station here and denied his involvement in the attack.

The suspect, Arturo Bistoyong, 55, former resident of Sta. Cruz, and his lawyer talked to police officials here on Wednesday. Bistoyong said he was willing to be investigated to clear his name.

Police on Tuesday filed double murder charges against Bistoyong before the municipal trial court here. The motive for the attack, according to the police, was a land dispute.

Bistoyong is part-owner of the land in Barangay Daligan that was being tilled by Leopoldo Caligtan, a former minister of the Pentecostal Church here.

Caligtan died on Sunday night, six days after he received the deadly package on Nov. 18. His daughter, Marjorie Lovely, 8, was killed instantly when she opened the "gift bomb." Two other Caligtan children—Shiela, 14, and Ryan, 19—suffered second and third degree burns.

"I was shocked (after I learned that I was named a) suspect in the bombing incident in Sta. Cruz. I came out to deny (the accusations) and to clear my name," Bistoyong told the INQUIRER.

Bistoyong, a former employee of the National Food Authority, is operating a small video services firm in Ilocos Norte.

Vice Mayor Jose Ping-ay, who met Bistoyong and his lawyer Robert Tudayan at the police station, said Bistoyong's appearance will have little effect on the case.

"His gesture of appearing before the police will not diminish the fact that the witness identified him. He will remain a suspect until he is cleared by the court," Ping-ay said.

The two tricycle drivers, Elias Jandoc and Ricardo Acosta, who delivered the package to the Caligtan family house at Barangay Daligan, were not included in the complaint after the police found that they had no knowledge about the contents of the package.

Police officials said the tricycle drivers would be tapped as witnesses. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Negros gov calls meet on terrorism

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz has ordered the immediate convening of all peace and order councils in the province to address terrorism threats.

In Executive Order 2002-13 dated Nov. 12 but released only Tuesday, Arnaiz also ordered the strengthening of public safety plans and mobilization of barangay *tanods* to address terrorism threats.

Arnaiz noted that Negros Oriental, as determined during the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) meeting on Oct. 30, 2002, was open to terrorist threats and infiltration by communist rebels in the barangay level.

Arnaiz said hotels, restaurants in coastal areas and beach resorts, especially in the southern parts of the province were identified as potential targets of the Abu Sayyaf whose victims include tourists.

Also included as potential targets were government buildings, installations and facilities.

The governor's order was based on a memorandum circular issued by Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. dated Oct. 24, which called for the immediate convening of all peace and order councils in all local government units.

The LGUs were ordered to adopt or update and strengthen their respective public safety plans to include an anti-terrorism component and organization.

They were also told to convene Barangay Peace and Order Committees.

The LGUs were also ordered to mobilize all barangay *tanods* in all villages as part of the overall collective effort to address terrorism threats.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel • Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Palaweños fight for Malampaya

By Dominique Monera-Tabora
Puerto Princesa City

THE STATEMENT of President Macapagal-Arroyo that the Malampaya Natural Gas Project is not within the territory of Palawan has not only caused lost revenues for the province. It might also lead to the loss of the case against 38 Chinese fishermen caught illegally fishing in Malampaya waters.

The defense lawyer of the Chinese fishermen used the President's pronouncement in his motion to dismiss the poaching and illegal fishing charges due to lack of jurisdiction.

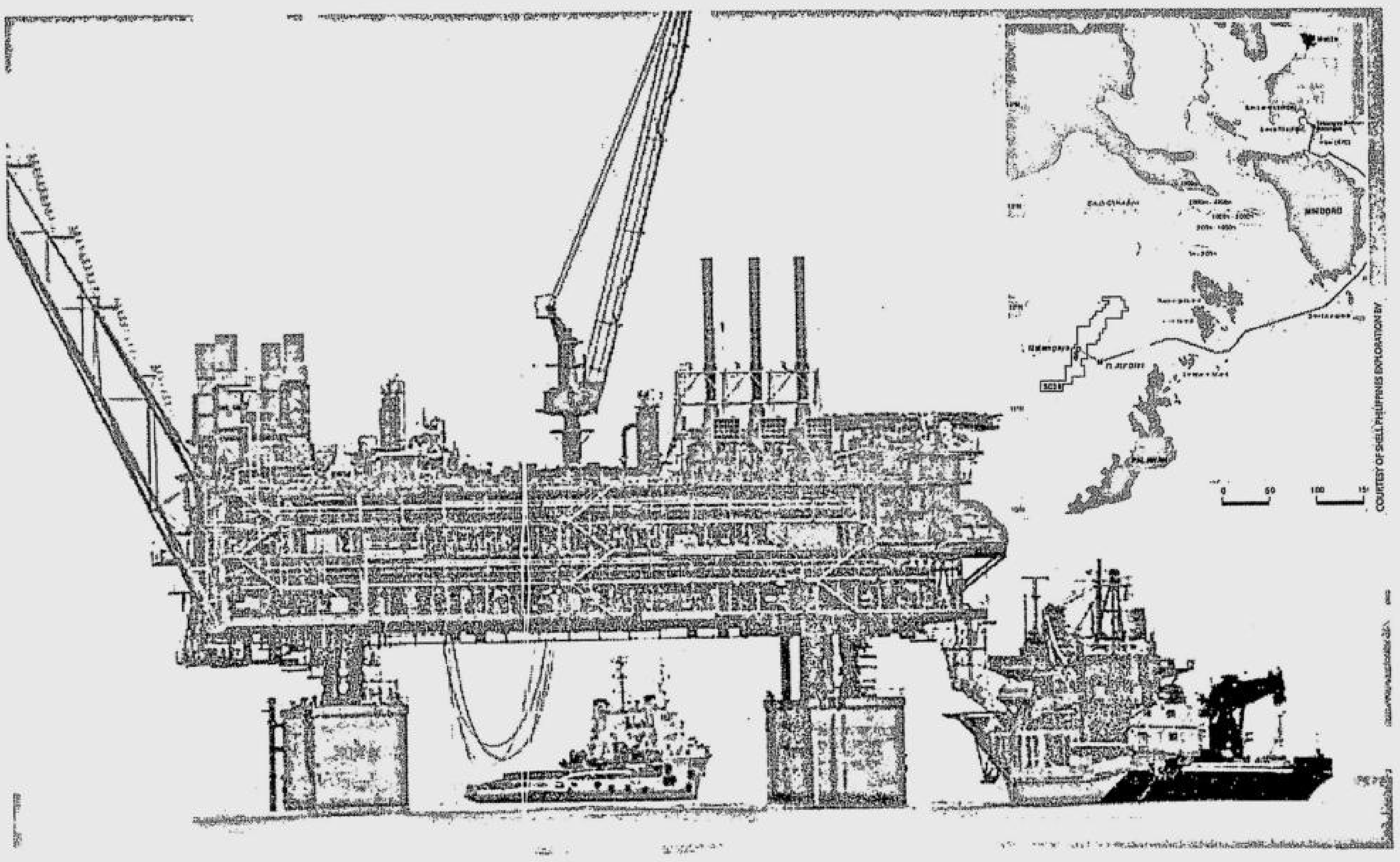
The arraignment last Nov. 22 of the 38 Chinese fishermen was held in abeyance pending the opinion of the Department of Justice on court jurisdiction.

Lawyer Zoilo C. Cruzat, in his motion to quash the case against the 38 Chinese apprehended fishing six miles from the Malampaya Natural Gas Platform last Sept. 12, said that Branch 52 of the Regional Trial Court in Puerto Princesa "has no territorial jurisdiction over the place where the alleged offenses were committed."

He also used the joint affidavit of Lt. Rodello Laraya and Ensign Pio Labaco of the Philippine Navy, which states that the 15 small boats of the two Chinese fishing vessels were actually used in fishing when intercepted 32 nautical miles northwest of El Nido at the Malampaya Natural Gas Project Exclusion Zone.

Seized from the Chinese were 1.8 tons of live groupers and Napoleon wrasses worth about P1.4 million, empty bottles of sodium cyanide solution and powder, homemade dynamites and black pellets suspected to be components of explosives.

Samples taken from the confiscated fishes were tested positive for cyanide by the CDT laboratory in Puerto Princesa City.



COURTESY OF SHELL PHILIPPINES EXPLORATION BV

IS MALAMPAYA, site of the natural gas project, part of Palawan province or not? Provincial officials hope this question would be resolved soon by the Department of Justice so that they could plan for whatever share they could get in the project's proceeds.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Debate

The President's pronouncement during the commissioning of the gas-fired power plants in Batangas in September 2001 that "Malampaya-Camago is near Palawan," was much debated in Palawan.

In another instance, during an interview over radio dzBB last April 2002, the President said "there should be a 60-40 sharing if the natural gas find is within the border of Palawan but if it is located outside of it . . . there would be a share but this is only out of the goodwill of the government. This is off the shore of Palawan."

This contradicted a statement she made during her visit to Puerto Princesa City in June 2001 after the Abu Sayyaf abducted guests from the Dos Palmas resort. She declared that Palawan would become the richest province in the country because of its gas share in the Camago-Malampaya Natural Gas Project.

Her statement then was in concurrence with various documents recognizing Palawan's share in the project. One document is Administrative Order No. 381 of former President Fidel V. Ramos which stated that ". . . the province of Palawan is expected to receive about $2.1 billion from the total government share of $8.1 billion" from the proceeds of the Camago-Malampaya Natural Gas Project over a period of 20 years.

This was followed by a request by then Energy Secretary Francisco Viray dated June 20, 1998, for a deferment of 50 percent of Palawan's share for the first seven years, to enable the national government to meet the "Take or Pay Quantity" obligation of the National Power Corp. amounting to $222 million.

Reexamination

On Nov. 27, 2000, Finance Undersecretary Joel A. Bañares wrote a confidential letter to Gov. Joel T. Reyes discussing the "Sale of Government's share in the Camago-Malampaya Gas Project" and mentioned the advantage of a proposal of Lehman Brothers, which "given a fair valuation, the proceeds will be considered revenues rather than borrowings and will thus contribute to an actual reduction in the budget deficit."

But right after the President's public acknowledgement of Palawan's share last June 2001, the Department of Finance recommended to the Office of the President a reexamination of the validity of the issuances made by Ramos and Viray.

Unaware of the move of the Department of Finance, Reyes, in a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo through Finance Secretary Jose Camacho and Secretary of Energy Vince Perez dated July 27, 2002 said, "the Provincial Government of Palawan has started a process to tap the net proceeds from the oil and gas production of Camago-Malampaya to help develop our beloved province."

The matter was forwarded to Chief Presidential Legal Adviser Avelino J. Cruz for study. After conducting a study, Cruz stated in a memorandum to President Macapagal-Arroyo dated July 25, 2001 that "the DOF failed to consider special laws that expressly state the following: 1. The territory of Palawan extends to the open sea and its marine reserves; and 2. Malampaya is consistently considered as part of Palawan."

Cruz also recommended that the Office of the President request a DOJ opinion.

Dr. Antonio Socrates, who heads the Palawan Spratlys Commission, has denounced the president's pronouncement that Malampaya is off Palawan as "treasonous."

"If the President believes that Malampaya/Camago is not in Palawan, she is also conceding that the Kalayaan Island Group is not in the Philippines," he said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Geology

"The country's strongest and virtually the only credible basis for claiming the Spratlys is geological and it is therefore treasonous for any Filipino to declare that Malampaya/Camago does not belong to Palawan," he added.

He said all offshore petroleum deposits that are being economically exploited in the world today are in the continental shelf, no matter how far they may be away from dry land or how deep under the sea.

"The oil wealth of the Philippines is off the shores of Mainland Palawan as Palawan is at the center of the Department of Energy-declared 'corridor of concentration' for the exploration of petroleum."

Socrates explained that since the early 1980s, it has been geologically established that the northern half of Palawan is a 'micro-continent' that broke off from the southeastern rim of the Eurasian (Europe and Asia combined) continent 30 million years ago and drifted to where it is now.

"The separation of the 'North Palawan Continental Terrane' from Eurasia created the South China Sea," he revealed.

"Since the Malampaya/Camago Oil Field lies on the continental shelf of Palawan, we can prove that the Spratly Islands are on that continental shelf, too," he added.

The continental shelf used to be coastal plains a few million years ago, which were submerged when the world became warmer after the Ice Age, he said.

Former provincial budget officer Caesar R. Ventura also pointed out that the location of the Camago-Malampaya Gas Project falls within the territorial boundary of Palawan as defined by Republic Act 7611 or the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan.

Ventura also questioned why the President and the DOF are now claiming that Malampaya is not part of Palawan when the Shell Philippines Exploration is already remitting to the province its share of the gas proceeds.

Agreement

Ventura, Socrates, provincial board member Gerry Ortega and the Palawan clergy are opposing the draft Malampaya-Camago Natural Gas Memorandum of Agreement offered by the national government, which proposes to give Palawan financial assistance equivalent to 20-percent share in the gas proceeds instead of the 40 percent stipulated under the Local Government Code.

Last Sept. 18, Bishop Pedro D. Arigo of the Apostolic Vicariate of Puerto Princesa and Bishop Edgardo S. Juanich of the Apostolic Vicariate of Taytay jointly wrote a pastoral letter that said the MOA presented by the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to the provincial government on the share of the province is "legally and morally objectionable and will constitute a grave injustice to our people."

The bishops and priests of the two vicariates of Palawan "find the MOA anomalous and immoral."

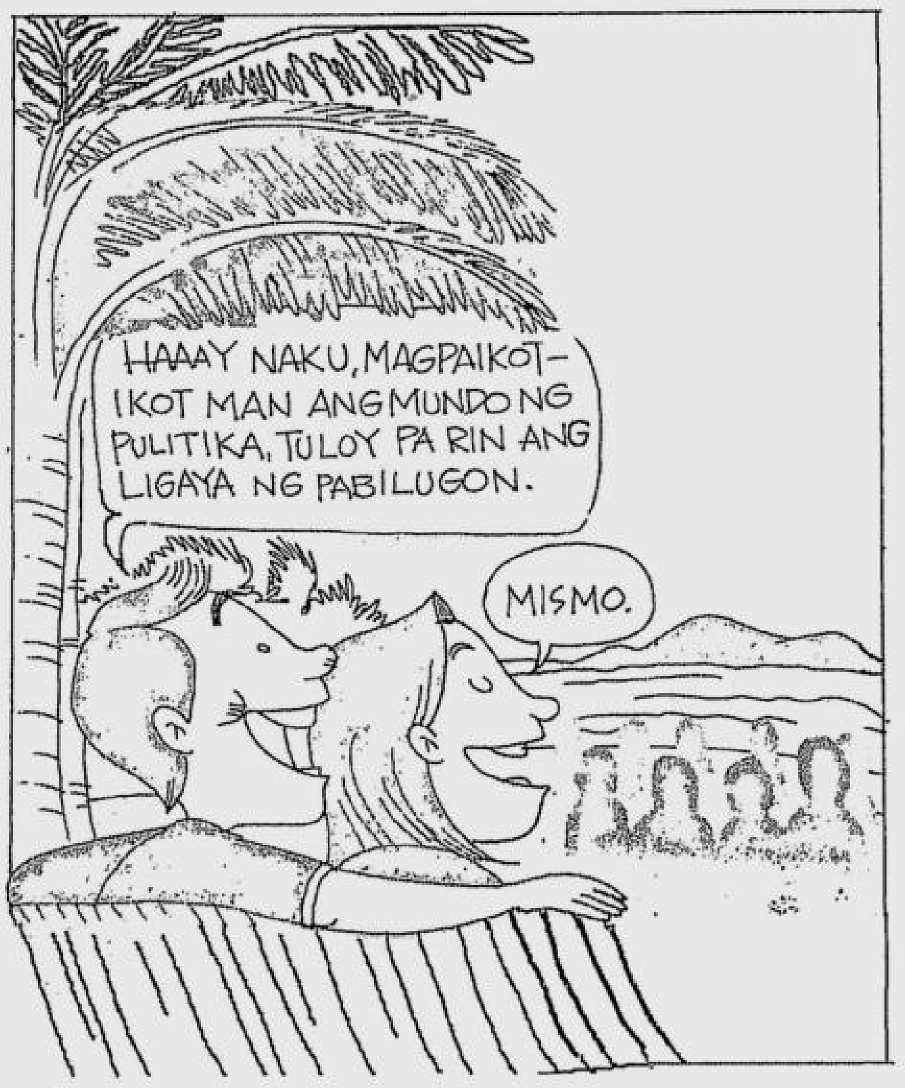
"To agree to the MOA . . . is to possibly surrender the rights of Palaweños of the present and future generations and to traitoriously consent to the 'poaching' of the rich God-given resources of the province . . . not by the Chinese intruding fishermen, but by the present administration. The MOA in effect is a virtual sell-out, a waiver of rights of Palawan, an insulting injustice to Palaweños," the pastoral letter said.

The pastoral letter exhorted parishioners "to reject the scheming bribery offered in this MOA."

The issue was also discussed in church homilies.

The Palawan clergy, composed of 61 diocesan and five religious priests, has launched a signature campaign in all parishes of Palawan and placed a donation box to fund a media campaign against the MOA.

Moon watching rises beyond politics in Puerto Princesa


HAAAY NAKU, MAGPAIKOT-IKOT MAN ANG MUNDO NG PULITIKA, TULOY PA RIN ANG LIGAYA NG PABILUGON.
MISMO.

By Jofelle Tesorio
Puerto Princesa City

AFTER the sudden change of administration in Puerto Princesa City due to a recall election, city residents gathered to watch the beauty of the full moon on Nov. 20 to continue the monthly ritual that started during the term of recalled mayor Dennis Socrates.

The Palaweño tradition of watching the full moon or "Pabilugon" used to be a part of the former mayor's cultural program under the *Kultura at Sining Di Pangkaraniwang Gawain* or Kusi@DiPaGa.

Pabilugon has gained prominence among residents because it has become a venue where songs, poetry, dance and other forms of art are showcased.

This month's "Pabilugon" was held under the coconut trees in a beach front volunteered by a private citizen, away from its former venue, which was a hill in the city's sports complex.

Organizers of the gathering headed by Bimbo Fernandez, former head of Kusi@DiPaGa, saw to it that politics would not affect what they have started.

"Whatever happens, *Pabilugon* will stay and will continue to imbibe cultural awareness and positive energies to all of us," Fernandez said.

As usual, Kusi@DiPaGa's mainstay cultural band, Palawano, spiced up the evening with its rendition of Palawan songs and original compositions.

To cater to a much younger generation of moon watchers, the band never failed to sing Moonstar 88's "Torete" and The Corrs' "All the Love in the World."

Palawano also sang some cuts from its album that will be launched in the next full moon on Dec. 20.

"Pabilugon na naman, tayo'y magsama-sama, tayo'y magsayawan, halinang mag-awitan, tumingin ka sa kalawakan, isang ngiti ang masisilayan,'Pabilugon na naman . . . bigyan ng alay at musika . . . (It's full moon once again, let's gather, let's dance, sing, stare at the vast sky, smile, it's full moon once again . . . let's give our offerings and music)," said a portion of the *Pabilugon* theme which is included in the album.

Fernandez said there are ten songs in the album, which is an excellent blend of tribal, island, and plain music with a global rub.

"I'm so happy to experience this kind of moon fellowship. I never expected that this would be so rejuvenating," said first-timer Vicky Mendoza, provincial director of the Philippine Information Agency.

Joining Mendoza was local writer and activist Edwin Rondina. He has been a "Pabilugon" addict since it started more than a year ago.

Rondina recalled that the most memorable one he had was when the members of the audience were asked to read their poems.

"That was the best for me. Poetry is different. One can sing or dance but creating your own thoughts through poetry is the most rewarding. There's plenty of room for discussions after a poetry reading," Rondina mused.

Campus Radio DJ Janis Gordola said the monthly moon watching cuts across economic barriers.

"We don't spend much here unlike going to the bars where we hear the usual popular songs. Here, we can do whatever we want. No bar or restaurant can offer this kind of entertainment because they worry about their market. We don't even need to dress up. Just come as you are," she said.

Aside from the regular *Pabilugon* in the city's main district, some rural barangays did their own version of moon watching.

The barangay folk believe that this event brings everyone closer to God and to each other.

Cultural practices that are now in oblivion because of modernization are being revived.

Cebu City jail exec relieved amid probe of drugs, anomalies

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The jail warden of the Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center (BBRC) has been relieved pending investigation of the alleged abuses of jail officials and proliferation of illegal drugs in the city jail.

Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus announced Tuesday the relief of Supt. James Labordo during a surprise inspection of the city jail.

"This (the relief) is not a finding of guilt. This is just an exercise of management prerogative. Whether he is guilty or not, this is subject of the investigation," said Corpus, who heads the fact-finding committee tasked to look into irregularities inside the city jail.

Labordo would return to his old post as chief of staff of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology-Central Visayas.

Senior Insp. Reynante Rubio, deputy jail warden, would temporarily take over Labordo's vacated position pending the appointment of a permanent warden.

Preliminary findings of their investigation confirmed the allegations of drug trafficking inside the city jail, said Corpus.

He, however, said the relief of Labordo was a management prerogative after the warden failed to manage the jail smoothly.

While it had not been established if Labordo had knowledge of the proliferation of illegal substance in the jail, Corpus said the warden was still accountable for command responsibility.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. formed a fact-finding team to look into the reported proliferation of illegal drugs in the city jail.

Roberto Abejero, Department of Interior and Local Government-Central Visayas director, was named task force vice chair while lawyers from the DILG legal service would serve as members.

Corpus said the committee has also come up with measures to curb alleged illegal activities inside the jail.

Among these was asking the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) to set up a monitoring team in the BBRC to address the proliferation of illegal substances inside the city jail.

Two K-9 dogs would also be assigned at the BBRC to detect illegal drugs being smuggled in by some visitors of the detainees.

A moral spiritual recovery program would be implemented, not only for inmates but also for the BBRC officials and jail guards.

TALKS WITH MILF

Gov't warned of 'recycled' pact

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) asked the government to exercise caution in the Mindanao peace process, saying it may end up with a recycled agreement.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu issued the reminder as the technical working group of the government's peace panel is set to finalize on Wednesday the proposed final draft of the peace agreement.

Eduardo Ermita, presidential adviser for the peace process, told Church-run radio station dxMS here that the draft shall be presented to the MILF peace panel in Malaysia when negotiators resume formal talks next month.

In the proposed draft, according to Ermita, is a political package that will include rehabilitation of war-torn communities dominated by MILF fighters and their families.

More than Malacañang, Kabalu said, Mindanaoans and the Bangsamoro people favor the fast tracking of the peace process provided it will really provide a genuine and lasting peace.

"We do not want to come up with a half-baked peace accord," Kabalu said.

"We have learned from the agreement signed by the government and the Moro National Liberation Front," he added.

He said the agreement with the MNLF was not effective and it failed because not all issues were covered by the agreement.

Kabalu, however, would not reveal the issues and concerns that the MILF believes should be addressed.

"We have presented the talking points, the discussions have been on going, we are scrutinizing every detail so that in the end we can come up with a genuine agreement."

Kabalu said MILF chair Salamat Hashim instructed Murad Ebrahim, MILF chief negotiator, to have extra "patience" in dealing with the government.

"The road to peace is long and tedious yet taking extra patience to avoid mistakes is one way to come up with a genuine solution to the problem," Kabalu later told the INQUIRER.

The peace process is five years old and has spanned three administrations.

Ermita earlier said Malacañang is expecting the signing of the agreement with the MILF before the end of the year.

The government's technical working committee is expected to complete the draft and forward it to its counterpart in the MILF for its counter-proposals.

Ermita said while the proposed draft is being finalized, the government's back-channel efforts continue with Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser for special concerns, keeping an open line with the MILF chief negotiator.

Gonzales has been in constant contact with Murad who is now in Kuala Lumpur. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

3,000 Cebu workers sign petition vs nat'l ID system

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—More than 3,000 workers in Cebu have expressed their opposition to the government's plan to implement a national ID system.

At least 3,100 members of 50 labor unions in Cebu signed a petition against the national ID system, saying it was not the answer to terrorism.

Greg Janginon, chair of the Partido ng Manggawa in Cebu, said copies of the petition would be submitted to the six congressmen in Cebu.

He said they would also seek an audience with the Cebu lawmakers to air their opposition to the national ID system.

"Instead of allocating a big sum of money to that project, the government should instead allocate funds for livelihood programs for the workers," he said.

Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia and Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña had volunteered Cebu as the pilot area in the implementation of the national ID system.

But Osmeña said only government workers would be compelled to have a national ID while it would be voluntary to those in the private sector.

In their petition, the workers asked Garcia and Osmeña to withdraw their offer to make Cebu the pilot area for the ID system.

They said they supported the administration plan to destroy terrorist groups but that the government should also reform the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

Janginon said they came up with the petition after the union leaders decided to take an official stand on worker-related issues during the Labor Centennial Commission gathering held last month, which was attended by hundreds of union leaders and members.

Among those taken up was the national ID system, he added.

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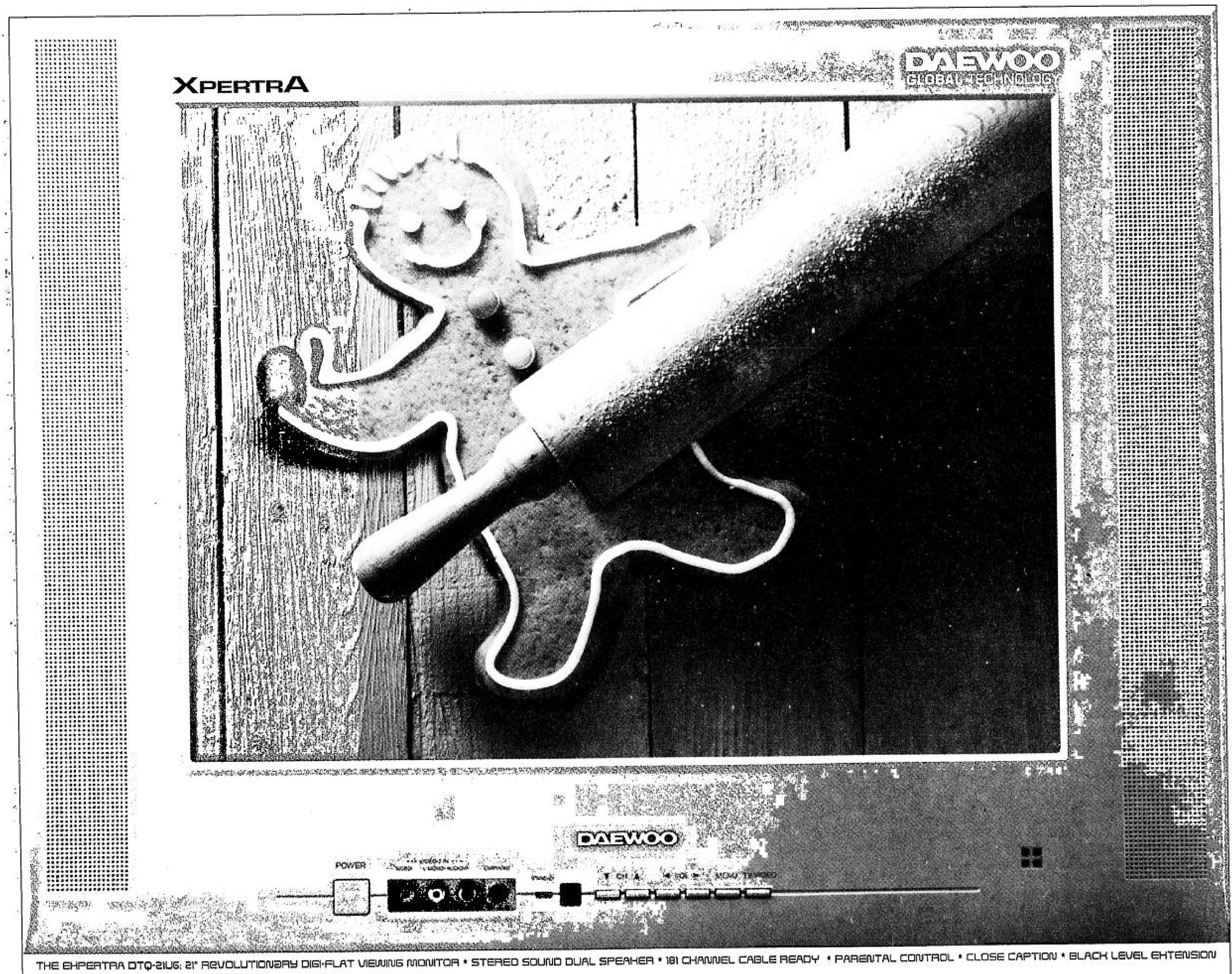

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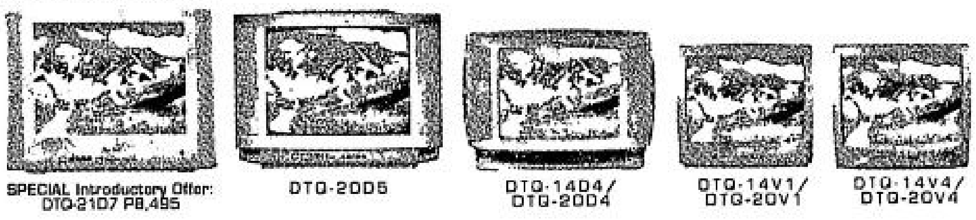

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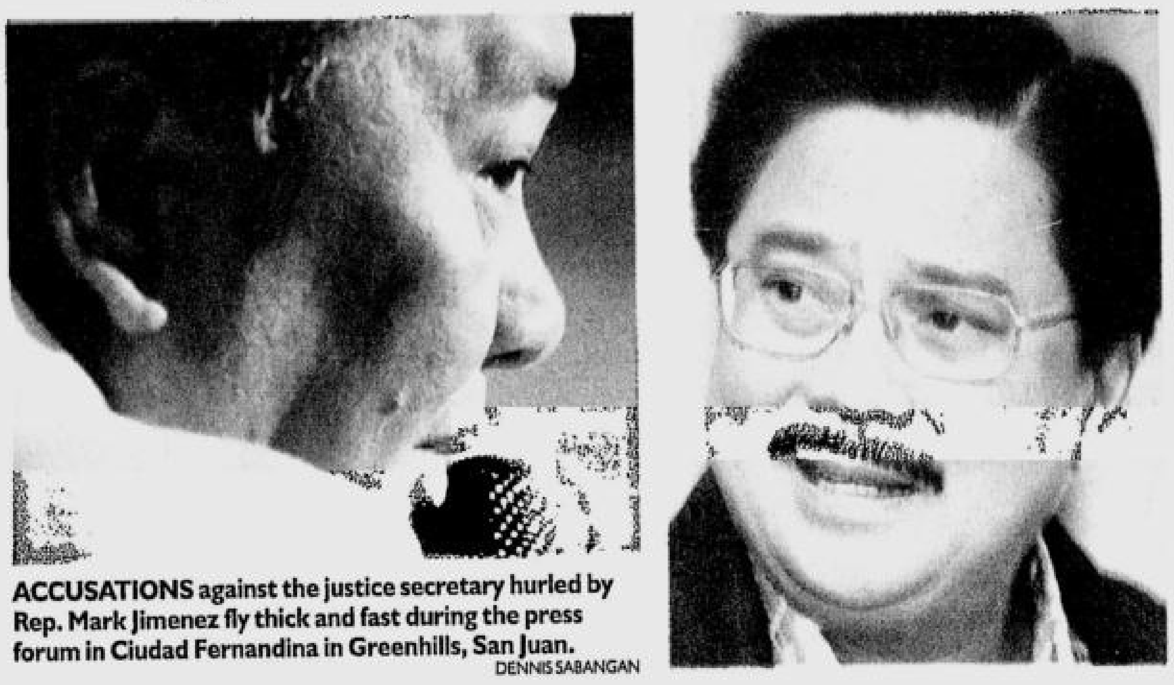
Escaler drops two bombshells

From page A1

It is where you asked me to wire the money. So, why don't you authorize the opening of that account so that we don't need to invoke the Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement with Hong Kong," Jimenez told the INQUIRER.

He called Escaler's statement "an entrapment."

Escaler, identified as the man who was always with Perez when the latter visited Jimenez several times in his Forbes Park residence, had allegedly faxed the instruction to Jimenez to send the money to the Coutts Bank in Hong Kong. The faxed instructions carried on its faxline Escaler and Company, and phone No. 892-8519. *(See story on this page)*



ACCUSATIONS against the justice secretary hurled by Rep. Mark Jimenez fly thick and fast during the press forum in Ciudad Fernandina in Greenhills, San Juan.
DENNIS SABANGAN

Country rep

Escaler was Coutts Bank's country representative here for five years, according to a seasoned banker.

The Swiss-based lender has no local branch but Escaler, given his impeccable business credentials and network, was reportedly allowed by the parent bank to engage in private banking in the Philippines.

Such activities usually involve getting deals deemed profitable for investors of Coutts Bank worldwide.

The same banker said Escaler was not necessarily engaged in money-laundering activities prior to his involvement in the alleged Perez extortion scandal.

"This guy had been active in deals as far back as the time of (President) Ramos. His activities are not necessarily illegitimate," said another banker.

Sudden appearance

Until last night, Escaler had not been seen in public since the Jimenez privilege speech on Monday accusing Perez of having extorted $2 million from him.

Suddenly, he appeared on national television last night denying that he was used as a conduit for the alleged bribe.

"As a private banker, I'm regulated, prohibited to reveal the nature or particular of any account which may have been opened through my services," Escaler reiterated to GMA-7's Frontpage news anchor Mel Tiangco.

When asked to elaborate, Escaler again said, "I deny, however, categorically that any of my bank accounts were ever utilized or opened for and in behalf of Secretary Hernando Perez."

Escaler also explained that no one can just open a bank account in Hong Kong under another person's name.

"I don't think so," he said. "The banks will not agree to that. (It) should be disclosed (to the bank) ... the (real) owner of the account."

Neither confirm nor deny

Escaler said that banking laws in Hong Kong required the account holder to be the sole beneficial owner of the account.

Citing bank secrecy laws, Escaler refused to confirm or deny whether he ever had bank transactions with Jimenez.

He, however, challenged Jimenez to give him blanket authority to reveal everything he knows about the lawmaker's dollar-deposits abroad.

"When Congressman Mark Jimenez gives me the expressed written permission to disclose the particulars of whatever transaction he may have had with me, that's the only time I can talk about it and give any disclosure on the particulars."

When pressed for details by Tiangco, he said: "*Hanggang walang* written instruction *sa akin si* Mr. Jimenez *na puwede kong pag-usapan kung anumang transaction naming dalawa, e wala po akong masasabi dahil bangkero po ako* (Unless Mark Jimenez gives me written instruction that I could talk about our transactions, I cannot say anything because I'm a banker.)

He added: "You know (that) I could not answer the question. (I need) Mark Jimenez's go-signal. I'm a banker."

'Improbable'

Escaler went on to say that it was" improbable" for him and Perez to have boarded the same passenger airline to Hong Kong on the same day that the money was wired to Coutts Bank through Chase Manhattan in New York from Jimenez's account in a Uruguay bank.

Jimenez had alleged that Perez and Escaler were in Hong Kong on the day the money arrived in the bank.

Frequent traveler

In a separate interview with ABS-CBN's Ces Drilon, Escaler laughed off allegation that he and Perez went to Hong Kong together, and were billeted in the same hotel.

"I'm a frequent traveler," he quipped. He did not elaborate.

Escaler also belied allegations that he was a personal friend of Jimenez's. He said that the latter had wanted to testify against deposed President Joseph Estrada, so Jimenez asked to bring him to the "Philippine government."

"That's why I brought him to Secretary Perez," he said. "I don't really know him; he's just an acquaintance."

Another version

Escaler confirmed to a congressman that he owns the Coutts Bank account.

"He admitted that the account is in his name but he said that the money is no longer there," a congressman, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER.

But the congressman said Escaler had told him that the $2 million were dollars which Jimenez sold him.

"Nagbenta daw sa kanya ng dollars si MJ," the congressman said(MJ sold dollars to him).

This jibed with Jimenez's own statement at the Ciudad Fernandina press forum yesterday that Escaler had given an "alibi" to friends about the $2 million in his bank account.

"Ernest Escaler will declare that he bought dollars from me," Jimenez told the forum.

"But he has one problem: I did not get the pesos," said Jimenez, eliciting laughter from the media representatives in the forum.

The $2 million is roughly equivalent to P100 million.

Jimenez said there had to be bank records of the peso-dollar exchange transaction if it were true.

Jimenez had revealed the bank account in Coutts Bank which he said was given to him by Escaler in a fax message on Feb. 13, 2001, days after Perez allegedly extorted the money from him right in his (Jimenez's) house in Forbes Park, Makati.

Jimenez said he wired the money from his bank in Uruguay on Feb. 23 last year, or 10 days after Escaler's instructions were faxed to him.

He said that whenever a transaction is dollar-denominated, there is always an advising bank in the United States which is involved because the currency is owned by the United States.

US bank confirms transfer

In this case, the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York confirmed the transfer of $2 million from Jimenez's account with the Trade and Commerce Bank in Uruguay to Account No. 400-922932, Coutts Bank's account number with Chase Manhattan.

After receiving the money, Coutts Bank credited the $2 million to Account. No. HO 13706, said to be under Escaler's name.

MJ to GMA: Open Hong Kong bank account

From page A1

documents that would prove his allegation that the money was sent from his bank in Uruguay, coursed through the Chase Manhattan bank in New York, and ended up in Coutts bank. He identified the Coutts Bank account as No. 400-922932 and in favor of Account No. 13706.

Jimenez urged the President to ask the Senate to immediately ratify the Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) in Criminal Matters between the Philippines and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China so that the account could be opened without a hitch.

The MLA was signed for the government by Perez on Feb. 3, 2001.

At the Senate, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, chair of the congressional oversight committee on the anti-money laundering law, held its first meeting to discuss the Jimenez exposé which was contained in a privilege speech the congressman delivered on Monday.

Magsaysay said that there was an international agreement among the anti-money laundering councils around the world to furnish information on such matter as the Coutts Bank account.

He said that both the Philippines and China were signatories to the United Nations resolution on anti-money laundering.

China is a member of the Financial Action Task Force that has oversight functions over members on matters involving money laundering.

'Remote'

But Sen. Panfilo Lacson said Hong Kong's cooperation was a "remote possibility."

It will all depend on the Anti-Money Laundering Council whose members are all appointed by President Macapagal, and they are not looking for the money. "They are busy defending Perez," Lacson added.

'I can do it in 72 hours'

Jimenez rose to the President's challenge for him to produce his evidence against Perez in 30 days.

"I can do it in 72 hours," he said, but added that he would not submit his original documents until there was already an MLA agreement and a commitment to open the Coutts account.

At the Ciudad Fernandina press forum yesterday, Jimenez offered another bonus to the Macapagal administration—that the secret Coutts bank account may contain more than $2 million because of indications that Perez and Ernest Escaler, the alleged go-between in the Perez-Jimenez transaction, had "other extortion activities."

It was Escaler, Jimenez said, who sent him a faxed instruction to send the money in the account number in Coutts Bank.

Jimenez furnished the INQUIRER a copy of the fax message which had the name and telephone number of Escaler on the faxline. Also yesterday, Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama and Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso called on Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo to release the flight manifests of Philippine Airlines and Cathay Pacific in February, March and April 2001 when Perez and Escaler reportedly made several trips to Hong Kong.

He said Perez and Escaler were in Hong Kong on Feb. 23 when he wired the money to the account.

"By God's grace, they were in Hong Kong when I wired the money," he said.

Like Jose Velarde account

Jimenez, who is facing extradition to the United States, likened the Coutts bank account to the Jose Velarde account which led to the downfall of President Joseph Estrada.

"The (Coutts account) will solve this mystery. This is like the Jose Velarde envelope that they refused to open," he said.

Once opened, he said, the bank would be forced to reveal the identities of the people who opened the account, withdrew the money and benefited from it.

"We will not resolve this issue for 100 years if we will not open that account," he said.

Jimenez had said that Perez extorted the money from him sometime in the third week of January last year and that the deal was consummated when he wired the money from his bank in Uruguay to the numbered account in Coutts Bank on Feb. 23, 2001.

On that day, according to Jimenez, Perez was at his home in Forbes Park, and told him that he would receive instructions where to send the money.

Jimenez said he has waived the secrecy of his bank account in Uruguay where the money originated.

Cover-up

.Jimenez said the Coutts Bank certifications to Perez and his brother-in-law Ramon Arceo Jr. were meant to muddle and cover up the money trail.

But he said the bank certification on Perez was true.

"Secretary Perez has no account in Coutts bank, that's true. Of course his (Perez's advisers) are all bright people. What I said is that I wired the money to that account upon the instruction of Escaler," Jimenez said in a forum at Ciudad Fernandina.

"But I know that money was there because my bank and the advising bank (Chase Manhattan of New York) confirmed that the account received the money," he added.

Villarama echoed his friend's testimony.

Not under own name

"There is no big thief who will open an account under his name," Villarama said, dismissing the certification of Coutts Bank on Perez's behalf.

"What is important is that after Escaler faxed the instruction and the account number to MJ, was the money received (by that account)?" Villarama said.

Jimenez said that even if the MLA was not ratified, this could already be invoked by the government if it wants the truth to come out.

He pointed out that the RP-US Mutual Logistics Support Agreement was only an executive agreement honored by both sides.

Other 'extortion' activities

Jimenez told the ABS-CBN News Channel that Perez and Escaler's several trips to Hong Kong indicated that there could have been other extortion activities and that the amount contained in that account could be bigger than $2 million.

Jimenez told the INQUIRER that Perez and Escaler "visited" certain business tycoons suspected of being financiers of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"There are rumors that Nani Perez visited these people with Escaler. Then suddenly, they were not included in the plunder case (against Estrada)," Jimenez said.

Jimenez earlier told the INQUIRER that Perez forced him to execute an affidavit against certain companies suspected of giving substantial money to Estrada and which have since turned supporters of Ms Macapagal.

He said Perez wanted something to use against these big companies should they support Ms Macapagal's rival in 2004.

Jimenez had said he refused to execute the affidavit because it could be used for extortion.

That's when he said Perez cursed and threatened him in front of his family. He threatened to withdraw his security.

Jimenez also clarified why he came across with the $2 million. It was to protect his family, he said, from harassment by Perez after he refused to execute an affidavit against the Estrada cronies.

Jimenez said that when he refused to execute the affidavits, Perez told him something like: ***"Ikaw ang titirahin ko"***. (I'm going to hit you). He said he took the warning seriously when Perez told him that he would pull out his security detail.

He said he had two choices at that time: "The affidavits or money." He decided to give the money, he said.

'Judicial terrorist'

A member of the Jimenez camp earlier told the INQUIRER that Perez threatened Jimenez that he would pull out his security so that he would be killed.

Jimenez said that his phones were tapped and he and his family were being trailed whenever they went out.

Jimenez said that Perez made the threats sometime in the third week of January 2001, in his home in Forbes Park when he went there with Escaler after lunch.

He said Perez returned with Escaler at about 5:30 p.m. the same day. By then he (Jimenez) had made up his mind to give him the money.

But he told the ANC that he only got about three months of reprieve from the harassment of Perez whom he called a "judicial terrorist."

Jimenez said Perez started harassing him when he learned sometime in May this year that Jimenez had told a third person about Perez's alleged extortion of $2 million. *With a report from Clarissa Batino*

Perez to issue power of attorney to Jimenez

From page A1

erez, who started his 30-day leave of absence yesterday, told the INQUIRER that, "My strongest defense is my innocence."

Perez said he would spend his time planning "legal actions" against his detractors.

But his main problem is how to criminally indict Jimenez without obstructing the latter's extradition.

Perez admitted that under the Extradition Law, the lawmaker was automatically prevented from being extradited once a criminal case is filed against the latter with Philippine courts. "My lawyers are studying the facts," he added.

Perez differentiated the main case from the bail case.

He said that Jimenez could post bail in the main case pending with the US court in Florida, while, he said, this was not true with the extradition proceedings pending with a Manila court. He said the latter was summary in nature.

Asking for help

Perez claimed that Jimenez also visited him in his farm in Batangas to ask him to go easy on his extradition case. He said that Jimenez visited him twice—the first occurred in November last year.

By then Jimenez was already a member of the House, and Perez "played host" as a "courtesy."

"He asked for my help ... but I told him that I have to do my job," said Perez who stressed that he had urged Jimenez to consider facing the charges in the United States.

"As I was saying all along, I have no account in Coutts Bank. That was the first time I ever heard of that bank, and, in fact, I am going to issue an authorization to (Jimenez) and to anyone who is willing to go to Coutts Bank. If he gets any money, it's his," Perez said.

Perez hurled the challenge to Jimenez despite a certification issued by two Coutts Bank officials in Hong Kong that neither the justice chief-on-leave nor his brother-in-law Ramon Arceo Jr., did not maintain an account with the bank.

"We write you to confirm that we do not have (nor ever had previously) any business relationship with you. We have no accounts for you either in your name or otherwise as beneficial owner," said the officials in a one-page letter sent separately to Perez and Arceo the other day.

Perez, whose 30-day leave of absence started yesterday, accused the lawmaker of a "well-planned media blitz" to discredit him so as to allegedly derail, once again, Jimenez's extradition to the United States.

During his emotional privilege speech on Monday, Jimenez corroborated Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama 's earlier exposé that Perez allegedly received $2-million.

He, however, did not cite reasons for doing so. He also evaded answering questions during interpellation by his colleagues in the House.

Perez said that he expected more attacks from the Jimenez camp.

Perez slammed Jimenez for concocting another lie in his speech—that the former blocked the latter's decision to be voluntarily extradited to the United States.

"He said he received a letter from his lawyers saying that (we in the Department of Justice) were preventing him from (doing so). That's not true," Perez categorically said.

"In fact, I've talked to US Ambassador Ricciardone (about the matter). I said this is what I've heard," said Perez who stressed that he even asked the US envoy to go easy on the lawmaker.

"He's (Jimenez) still an elective official of the Philippines. Please take him with dignity. Do not put handcuffs on him. The Filipino people will not like it. When he gets to the US, please intercede so that he will post bail."

Ricciardone assured Perez that he would order US marshals to dispense with the use of handcuffs.

"I could do that at my level. But with respect to the bail, you will have to make representations with the DOJ in the US,"said Perez, quoting Ricciardone.

Conflicting statements

As to the alleged voluntary extradition, Perez said he had ordered Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez at the time (designated by the Palace Tuesday as acting secretary) to clarify the matter with Jimenez.

"I asked Mercy to check if he is really serious to voluntarily go there. Mercy contacted him. But he told (Mercy), 'I have not authorized (my) lawyers to say so.' So I told Mercy, 'Where did you get that? If he doesn't want to (freely go to the United States), then (let's not help him).' "

Ricciardone then suggested to Perez to make representations with the United States "when everything is final."

"(Jimenez) had disauthorized everybody," so that negotiation bogged down, said Perez.

'Just to prove that he was not telling the truth, I'm even willing to write a letter to the US . . . (as regards his) voluntary extradition. (I want him) to recommend that he may given bail," said Perez.

"But the question is, 'is he willing?' He is issuing conflicting statements. It's so confusing. Even Ricciardone doesn't want to believe (him)," he added.

Bothered

Perez also admitted that the President was "bothered" by the "million-dollar" controversy.

Since he arrived from Thailand on Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Perez had talked twice over the phone.

"I asked to be allowed to go on a two-month leave of absence, but she said it was too long. So I said, '30 days,' which she agreed," said Perez.

He said he would also spend time to seek treatment for his bleeding ulcers.

Perez hoped that the controversy would result in a "real trial."

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SPORTS

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Iverson to Athens Olympics?

NEW YORK–Allen Iverson could be one of Larry Brown's players on the US team that will compete for a spot in the 2004 Olympics. USA Basketball made Brown's selection as coach of the Olympic team official Tuesday, and selection committee chairman Stu Jackson said Iverson would receive serious consideration to be among the "core group" of eight or nine players to be chosen by early February.

Turbochargers repulse Express

FEDEX'S Vergel Meneses (left) finds his aerial flight blocked by Shell's Edwin Bacani in the Selecta-PBA All Filipino Cup last night. Shell won, 76-75. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAMES FRIDAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
5:30 p.m.--Reb Bull vs Ginebra
7:30 p.m.--Coca-Cola vs Talk N Text

MIKE Hrabak struck when needed most as Shell Velocity nipped FedEx, 76-75, last night and stayed in the hunt for a quarterfinals slot in the Selecta-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Sustaining his offensive brilliance, Hrabak scored the Turbochargers' final five points--a triple and a jumper--as they posted their third win seven outings in the elimination round.

That record was good for a tie for sixth to eight places with Purefoods and Ginebra, which are also gunning for berths in the round of six.

FedEx is out of the running at 1-7.

The Express had a chance to turn the game around, but go-to-guy Vergel Meneses failed to convert on two 3-point attempts as time ran out.

Meneses, dubbed the Aerial Voyager, was grounded by the Turbochargers in the fourth quarter where he went 0-for-7 on field goal attempts.

The Express took a 46-35 spread at halftime only to be stymied when coach Perry Ronquillo fielded his defensive unit in the third quarter.

Simultaneous with their silencing of the FedEx gunners, Edwin Bacani, Hrabak, Chris Calaguio and Jun Marzan found their range with a triple each as Shell dropped a 20-8 bomb and wrested control at 62-59 going to the last period.

Bacani fired 14 of his 19 points in that stretch to complement Hrabak's effort.

Sta. Lucia beat Purefoods, 68-64, in the second game to improve to 3-4. Purefoods fell to 3-5.

Roy Luarca

Scores:

SHELL 76--Hrabak 24, Bacani 19, Calaguio 10, Bajar 9, Singson 4, Marzan 4, Jakcson 4, Del Rosario 2, Dela Cruz 0, Sison 0.

FEDEX 75--Arboleda 20, De Ocampo 14, Bernardo 12, Ritualo 12, NMeneses 10, Codinera 6, Realubit 1, Pumaren 0.

Quarters: 19-22, 35-46, 59-62, 76-75.

Picaa cagefest on today

GAMES TODAY *(Manila Downtown YMCA gym)*
2 p.m.--Trinity vs RP-Burlington
3:30 p.m.--Spring Oil vs Wang's Ballclub

THE MUCH-AWAITED 2002 Philippine Integrated Chinese Athletic Association Invitational Cup basketball tournament starts today at the Manila Downtown YMCA gym in Binondo, Manila.

Newly crowned national junior champion RP-Burlington will take the floor against Trinity College at 2 p.m. while reigning National Open champion Spring Cooking Oil will square off against Wang's Ballclub at 3:30 p.m. in this six-team tournament marking the return of Picaa into mainstream basketball.

Bantay Bata titlist University of the East and 5AZ Computer drew a bye.

Picaa chair Yang Koo Le will make the ceremonial toss along with Picaa president Alvin Lai Lian and Basketball Association of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim.

"As a BAP official, I would like to laud Yang Koc Le and Tai Lian for the timely revival of Picaa, which is the biggest commercial league in the Filipino-Chinese community during the '90s," said Lim.

"The BAP, headed by president Tiny Literal, hopes to see more tournaments from Picaa next year," added Lim.

The prestigious tournament is sponsored by YKL Color Films, Simco Traders, Fronte Motors and Bestank.

Football president elected on Dec. 5

SANTIAGO Elizalde, president of the National Capital Region Football Association (NCRFA), announced yesterday that the NCRFA elections will be held on Dec. 5.

Held every four years, Elizalde said the deadline of nomination of president is one month before the elections.

Elizalde is the son of International Olympic Committee Representative to the Philippines Francisco Elizalde.

Three candidates have been nominated for the top post--. Elizalde by the NCAA, Army Captain Arnel Fernandez by the AFP and Edward "Dodie" King by the UAAP.

The votes would come from representatives of the NCAA, UAAP, AFP, Fil-Chi Football Association, Metro Manila Girls Football Association (MMGA), Rizal Football Association (Rifa) and the Department of Education (Deped). Elizalde has said the Deped is not qualified to vote, an issue being contested by Deped and the other candidates.

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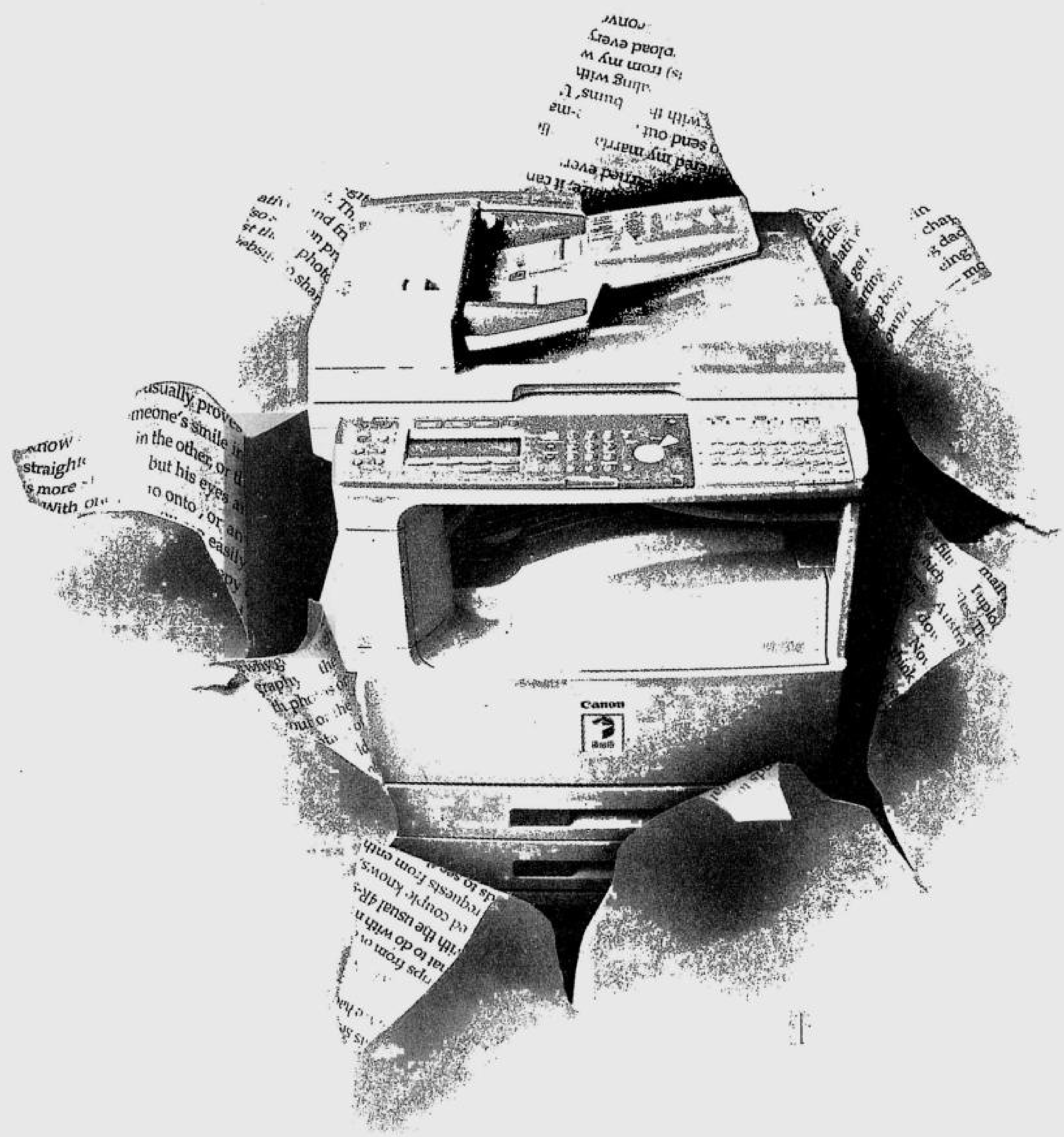

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Bypassed Barrios announces retirement from PBA

RENAULD N. Barrios, who was bypassed yesterday as a successor to the retiring PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino, said last night he would retire by the end of the year as executive director of Asia's first play-for-pay league.

"I have no rancor in my heart as I make this most crucial decision in my life," said Barrios. "The PBA has been my second home for the last 18 years and it was a home that nurtured me and my family even in the most trying of times. I will leave with no bitterness whatsoever and I wish both the league and the incoming commissioner well."

Barrios' statement:

"When Commissioner Jun Bernardino announced on July 29, 2002, his retirement at the end of the year, I prepared for two (2) eventualities: a) that I will retire at the end of the year if I don't become Commissioner, and b) that I will be the Commissioner in 2003.

"Now that I have been officially informed by the Chairman of the Board (FS Alejo III) that the Board has decided that the next Commissioner will be a fresh face, I want to state that I accept and respect the decision of the Board, which has full and sole discretion in appointing the Commissioner of the league.

"At this point, I want to express my sincere gratitude to:

1. The PBA, my employer for 18 years, two months by the end of the year. My employment has benefited not only me but also my entire family. All my three (3) children have college degrees: two (2) from the Ateneo and one (1) from the University of Asia and the Pacific. All three (3) are now gainfully employed, with the eldest working in New York after finishing culinary studies in the States.

"My employment with the PBA definitely played a significant role in my being able to achieve all these for my children.

"2. My bosom friend of more than 47 years, Com. Jun Bernardino, who recruited me to join the PBA more than 18 years ago.

"3. He is not here –but I want to thank him nevertheless–not just for being my guru and mentor but also for turning out to be a big brother to me: former Commissioner Rudy Salud.

"4. Another special person in my PBA career, who has become a very close friend to me and my family: Bobong Velez of Vintage.

"5. The current Chairman, Butch Alejo, a true professional and a real sportsman-gentleman, a man of his word. We interacted a lot this year during his Chairmanship and one (1) benefit I am thankful for is I have gained a new personal friend in Butch Alejo.

"6. His immediate predecessor, Iggy Yenko, who was very supportive of the Office of the Commissioner and truly appreciative of the need for its independence.

"7. My colleagues in the Office of the Commissioner: the Officers and staff, the Technical Group; and the Gameday personnel. Without them, the Commissioner and I would not have been able to function effectively through the years.

"8. Last but not the least, the sports media. You have all been kind to me all these years. At worst, I only got a slap on the wrist even from the hardest hitting of the columnists.

"Those who believed and supported me all these years, join me one (1) last time in accepting, respecting and embracing the decision of the Board. It is a big step towards the ultimate selection of the next Commissioner. I wish the league all the best in the years to come.

"*Mabuhay kayong lahat.* Thank you." *ASM*

BARRIOS

UE Champions' champ

By Roy Luarca

THE UNIVERSITY of the East Warriors proved steadier under pressure yesterday as they subdued the Far Eastern University Tamaraws, 57-55, to clinch the Champions League 2002 crown at the Makati Coliseum.

FEU blew its chance of forcing a decider with a passing error and a turnover in the last minute, giving UE breathing room to capture its second straight title after ruling the Bantay Bata Showdown last month.

Ateneo, represented by Andrew Cruz, Marco Benitez and Chris Quimpo, dumped University of Santo Tomas' Jinino Manansala, Jemal Vizcarra and Derrick Hubalde, 69-42, in the finals of the Petron team three-point shootout.

Ronald Tubid and James Yap starred for the Warriors in the fourth quarter, firing six points apiece that turned back the determined Tamaraws, who spent two hours at their dugout after the 82-58 rout they absorbed in Tuesday's Game One.

``We were motivated, among others, by what befell two of our team members, assistant coach Jalma Arnedo and player Ollan Omiping," said UE coach Boyzie Zamar, citing the inscriptions taped on the uniforms of the Warriors which read: "Coach Jalma and No. 4."

Arnedo's sister died on Monday in Baguio City while Omiping, a Mythical Five selection who was in a cast and watched the game from the bench, suffered a lacerated right hand following a collision with FEU's Cesar Catli in Game One.

Paul Artadi, UE's ace playmaker, was voted Most Valuable Player while Zamar earned his second straight best coach honors after the UAAP wars.

Scores:

UE 57—Yap 16, Tubid 13, Tan 8, Canaleta 7, Hubalde 4, Artadi 3, Masbang 2, Estrada 2, Booker 2, Butel 0, Alminario 0, Labagala 0.

FEU 55—Jones 13, Santos 12, Miranda 8, Rizada 8, Isip 6, Garcia 4, Sinco 2, Catli 2, Cutler 0, Yabut 0, Razon 0.

Quarters: 16-20, 30-29, 42-42, 57-55.

UE coach Boyzie Zamar is given a victory ride by his players and supporters after their 57-55 finals victory yesterday over FEU at the Makati Coliseum. ROMY HOMILLADA

Barbers orders BID to produce Fil-Am papers

By Rocky Nazareno

THE SENATE committee on games and amusement has ordered the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation (BID) to submit at least three documents which it could use to determine the authenticity of the claims by 25 Filipino-Americans playing in the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) that they have Filipino blood in them.

Committee chair Sen. Robert Barbers told the INQUIRER that he has instructed BID officials to return next week at the resumption of a Senate probe with documents that could prove the Fil-Ams' claims.

According to Barbers, he has asked the BID "for a document that contains the names and addresses of (the Fil-Ams') parents, a document showing the date of naturalization from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the certification of the hearing officer which heard the Fil-Ams' application for Filipino citizenship."

Said Barbers: "It's very easy to manufacture documents in this land. If diplomas can be faked, what more with birth certificates? We want to examine these documents more closely."

"When we receive all these documents, we can now examine more closely and case-to-case as to the authenticity of their claims," said Sen. John Osmeña, one of three senators who filed a resolution that initiated the Senate probe.

Osmeña also asked the BID to produce the documents that led to the issuance of a working permit to longtime local resident American Alex Compton who plays for the LBC-Batangas club in the Philippine Basketball League (PBL).

Osmeña is the owner of John O Juice Drinks squad which is seeing action in the PBL.

Under PBA rules, Fil-Am players need only to obtain a DOJ certification before they could be allowed to play.

In Tuesday's start of the Senate probe, PBA commissioner Emilio Bernardino Jr. assured the Senate panel that the league would not hesitate to expel any of the Fil-Ams should it be found that they had submitted fake documents.

Welcoat tackles Sunkist, eyes lead

STANDINGS	W	L
Blu	4	1
Welcoat	4	1
LBC	4	1
Montaña	4	2
ICTSI	3	3
Dazz	2	3
John O	2	4
Cheeseballs	1	5
Sunkist	0	4

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—Welcoat vs Sunkist
5 p.m.—Montaña vs ICTSI

SEIZING the top spot should pose little problem for Welcoat as it goes up against tailender Sunkist today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

The bigger problem, according to coach Leo Austria, is falling victim to overconfidence.

"We cannot relax even if we're up against a team which is still looking for its win," said Austria.

"Our biggest enemy is ourselves."

Welcoat presently shares the lead with Blu All-Purpose and LBC-Batangas with 4-1 card. A victory over Sunkist in their 3 p.m. clash will give Welcoat the solo leadership and an inside track in the battle for the top position the upper bracket, to be composed of the four top teams at the end of the single round-robin elims.

Montaña (4-2) tries to recover after losing to Dazz last Monday, 80-73, when it collides with ICTSI-La Salle at 5 p.m. *Dennis Eroa*

LSG golfers snare high school title

THE LA SALLE Greenhills bets carded their worst effort of 138 points at the Canlubang Golf and Country Club Tuesday but this was enough to give them the High School division crown in the 2002 PJGF Inter-School Junior Golf Championship.

Kevin Lachica scored 48 points, Ian Intal had 46 and Martin Mediana 44. Marco Olives made 36 but this did not count since the format was four-to-play and three-to-count.

Together with 147 at Tagaytay Highlands and 154 at the Philippine Navy Golf Club, La Salle Greenhills wound up with 439 to beat De La Salle Zobel.

OB Montessori captured the girls' division championship after beating Colegio San Agustin.

The tournament was conducted by the Philippine Junior Golf Federation headed by Edgardo "Tito Boy" Cantada.

Lachica captured the High School individual crown but not after going through a sudden-death playoff with St. Stephen High School's Jenz Tecson that extended to a third extra hole.

Jayvie Agojo closed out with a 48 to win the girls' division crown with 144.

Midlands hosts 4th Rotary meet

ANOTHER big field is expected in the fourth staging of the Rotary Club of Bagumbayan Presidents Golf Classic on Dec. 5 at the Tagaytay Midlands Golf and Country Club.

After attracting 217 entries last year, another well-attended tourney is shaping up according to Jose Paulo Campos, president of the organizing Rotary Club of Bagumbayan. Campos is joined in the organizing committee by Peter Chen as chair and past president Albert Que.

Major sponsors are Taylor Made adidas and Casino Filipino. Hole sponsors are Capitol Stationery, Johnny Choa, Rtn. Nelson Cheng, Rtn. Michael Tang, Neosteel Mfg. Corp., Filspin Inc., Futura Decor Products, Excelsior Spa, G.S. Go Bros Inc., Staffline Inc., The Pearl Manila, UCPB, Unitec Resources Inc., Integrated Pipe Specialist, Copacabana Apartment-Hotel, Copa Businessman's Hotel, Jchannel Ingredients Corp., Columbia Fruit Traders, First Oceanic Industries Inc. Freego and Lipton Ice tea.

Sunga, Tolentino sparkle

LADY member Corazon Sunga and her partner Norberto Tolentino beat a field of 200 teams to win the overall title in the sixth Founder's Cup, the Orchard Golf and Country Club's annual member-guest invitational held recently.

Sunga and Tolentino, carrying a handicap of 20 and playing in Class C, both finished with 86 points at the Palmer and Player courses for a 172 aggregate that won them the top plum by six points.

Dan Salvador III and Bob Horan (133 points), meanwhile, were the gross winners of the event backed by Nissan Commonwealth, Taylor Made adidas, PRGR, Green in Turf Corp., Sta. Elena Properties/Mountainview General Services Inc., Citibank and Cebu Pacific Air as major sponsors.

Nissan Commonwealth and Cici General Insurance were the hole-in-sponsors while minor sponsors were Exotic Gardens, The Turf Co., CPM Golf Corp., Dynamic Sports Corp., Casino Filipino, Duty Free Philippines, C-PAL Metal Works, Maisog Eng'g Works & Machinery, Sanitary Care Products Asia, Globe Telecoms, Aero Plus Multi-Services and Emeritus Security and Maintenance System.

Division champions were Teodorico Tiqui-Arnel Guballa in Class A, Rod Perez-Peping Nepomuceno in Class B, Fernando Pizarro-Efren Cruz in Class C and Arnel Mondonedo-Gumersindo Leuterio in Class D.

Tiqui-Guballa scored 165 to beat Shigemi Chikama-Baes Guilatco (156); Perez-Nepomuceno posted 163 to win over Mariano Marcos-Hector Miole (160); Pizarro-Cruz (161) prevailed over Vicente Marquez-Manolo Agojo (160) and Mondonedo-Leuterio (166) defeated Rodrigo Segura-Ramoncito Ilumin (161).

A Nissan Serena Q-RV-R automatic and a Nissan Sentra Exalta 1.6 GS were raffled off during the award rites.

PNGC srs prevail at Navy

THE SENIOR golfers of the Philippine Navy Golf Club again emerged overall champions recently to permanently keep the President's Cup at the Navy course.

The PNGC team is composed of Art Ampaya, Jun Ferido, Hector Samonte, Carlito Chua and Bert Aquino.

Other winners: Group 1--Vic Onella, Champion, Pamboy Paredes, runner-up; group 2 champion--Rod Villanueva, Roger dela Cruz, runner-up; group 3 champion--Ted Aquino, E. Sevillano, runner-up; group 5 champion--Dan Miranda, Frisco San Juan--runner-up, Ladies champion--Nanie Cruz and guest champion--Henry del Rosario.

Punsalan, Ilagan top Architects' tilt

WHILE architect Joey Punsalan claimed fame in the 11th Architects Golf Classic held recently at Sta. Elena Golf Club by being overall champion, architect Marty Ilagan successfully defended his three-year dominance in the low gross category.

An unprecedented feat and one that added prestige to the event's 11-year history, Ilagan retained his title by hitting 3-over par 72. Although marred by a downpour that forced some players to succumb to rain check, architect Ilagan treated the hostile weather as just another hazard. The focus and will power, he claims, are part of the discipline he gained from being a former national tennis player. Currently, he is the tennis coaching professional of the Manila Polo Club, aside from training six national junior players. His home course is the Manila Southwood.

His spoils included a trophy, a Swiss army watch and Etonic golf shoes. The same prizes also went to architect Joey Punzalan whose name will be engraved in the Architects Golf Classic perpetual glass trophy done by Ramon Orlina.

Division honors went to architects Ricky Solatorio for Class A; Edwin Gumilla for Class B; Randy Banzon for Class C; Raymund Sarmiento for Class D; Marilen Bantug for Ladies' Group; and Tony De Ubago for Guests Group.

Jaycees golfest

THE FOURTH and final leg of the four-tournament Manila Jaycees Senate Golf Reunion will be played on Dec. 6 at the Manila Golf and [illegible]ry Club.

M[illegible] Jaycee Senate President Pros Mad[illegible] said more than 50 Jaycee senators are e[illegible]ed to take part in the tournament orga[illegible] to bring together golfing senators of the [illegible]nila Jaycees– adjudged most outstandin[illegible] Jaycee chapter in the world five times.

SMART DEAL

Smart Communications head for PCMSD Boy Martirez (second from right) and tournament overall coordinator Shean Bedi shake hands after signing the contract making Smart the presenter in the 53rd Fil-Am Golf Invitational slated Dec. 2-7 at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City. Smart executives Julie Carceller (extreme left) and Miles Inocentes are also in photo.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Yao Ming on IBC 13

NBA rookie sensation Yao Ming, the first Asian to be picked number one overall in the NBA Draft, gets to display his amazing talents tonight when the Houston Rockets take on the Golden State Warriors at 7 p.m. on IBC-13.

After a slow start, the 7-5 Yao erupted last week and averaged 19.3 points, 9.0 rebounds and 2.0 blocks in Houston's four games, including a 30-point performance against the league-leading Dallas Mavericks.

Yao's play has turned a lot of heads, including that of Lakers' center Shaquille O'Neal. Known more for disparaging his competition, O'Neal was so impressed with Yao that he predicted that Yao "shall be The Man" someday.

High-flying Vince Carter returns to action in today's other featured NBA game between the Toronto Raptors and New York Knicks "live" at 8 a.m. on the Solar Sports Network (Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable), with a replay at 9:30 p.m.

CHAMPS
Ateneo's Christian Canlas (right), powered by adidas and Wilson, emerged champion in the 14-under boys singles in the recent 21st PCA Tennis Championships. At left is Kyle Dandan, the 16-under boys singles champion.

SHAQ STRUGGLING

Lakers: 6th straight road loss

MIAMI—Shaquille O'Neal was held to 15 points in his third game since returning from toe surgery as the Miami Heat won for just the third time this season, beating Los Angeles, 97-85, Tuesday.

Reserves Mike James and LaPhonso Ellis sparked the Heat (3-10), who came into the game tied for last place in the Atlantic Division. James scored 14 points and Ellis 13, and both sank key 3-pointers in the fourth quarter.

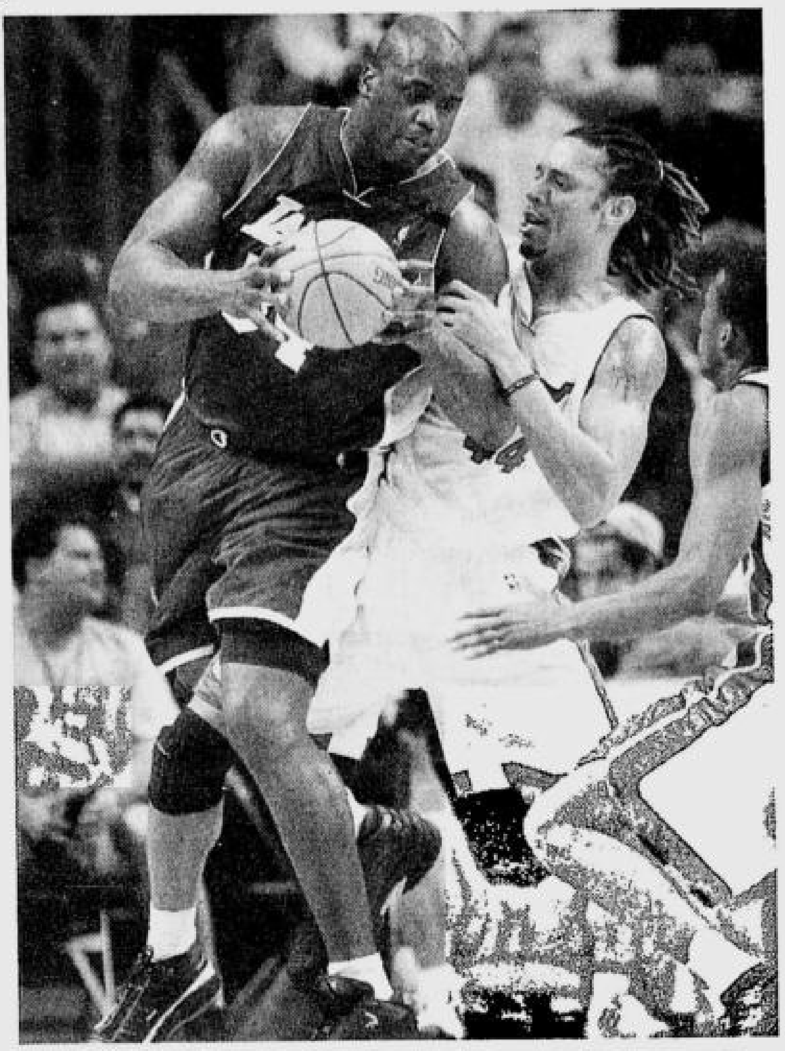
The Lakers fell to 2-1 since O'Neal's return. O'Neal played a season-high 32 minutes but was too rusty to take advantage of the Heat's undersized front line. He missed 10 of 15 shots, including an uncontested layup and an alley-oop dunk.

Los Angeles lost its sixth road game in a row.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Sacramento 91, Cleveland 85; Miami 97, LA Lakers 85; Atlanta 119, Seattle 116 (OT); Indiana 88, Washington 84; Denver 85, San Antonio 81; Portland 77, Houston 71; Utah 99, LA Clippers 94.

AFP



SHAQ (left) finds traffic against Miami Heat center Brian Grant. The Heat beat the Lakers, 97-85.

AFP

Indian makes pitch for marathon

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IN A last-ditch effort to get marathon included in the Southeast Asian Games next year, the influential Asian Athletics Association wrote the Vietnam SEAG organizers a letter of request in behalf of the "very important" sports disciplines.

AAA president Suresh Kalmadi of India last Saturday sent a letter to Nguyen Danh Thai, president of the Vietnam Olympic Committee and chief of the SEAG organizers, to lobby for marathon for one last time.

The Vietnam organizers are expected to come up with the final list of events on Dec. 5, exactly one year before the biennial meet.

"As you know, marathon is a very important event in athletics. I therefore request you to please include these marathon races also in your competition schedule," said Kalmadi in his letter.

The move is the last of a series of uproar brought about by Vietnam's decision to scrap marathon, among other sports. They also wanted to take out golf and bowling, but are said to be softening their stand against the two sports.

Filipinos Christabel Martes and Roy Vence won the men's and women's categories of the event in Malaysia.

PCA netters pocket interclub title

HOST Philippine Columbian Association outclassed Villamor Air Base, 4-1, to pocket the interclub team title in the 21st PCA Open Tennis Championships last Sunday.

Former Davis Cupper Beeyong Sision spearheaded the formidable PCA squad. Other members were Ed Reyes, Conrad Francisco, Efren Ocampo, Albert Chiu, Aldrin Geluz, Michael Misa, Charlie Niu, Eddie Gomez and Mike Tan.

Villamor's team was composed of Elmer dela Cruz, Romy de Guzman, Manny Capulong, Bob Mastrili, Frank and Richmond Paguyo, Dolmer Miranda, Buboy Silvoza, Mike Suarez and Meo Escareal.

Hillsborough, represented by Noel Tambunting, Florencio bulaong, Ronnie Tambunting, Morris Melendrez, Boyet Tutanes, Gerard Maronilla, Jojo Tomacruz, Tonilo Clement, Jackie Tomacruz and Dustin de Torres, scored a 3-2 victory over Manila Polo Club to settle for third place.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - New York vs Toronto, 8 a.m., Solar Sports, Houston vs Golden State, 7 p.m., IBC 13
POOL: World Pool Masters 2002, 2 p.m. (r) and 7 p.m., ESPN
Rack 'Em Up, 5 p.m. (r), ESPN
GOLF: LPGA Mizuno Classic, 9 a.m., ESPN
PGA Grand Slam of Golf 2002, 9 a.m. and 10:30 p.m., Star Sports
Nedbank Golf Challenge 2002, 5:30 p.m., Star Sports

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Valley Golf Club notched 302 points to rule the 5th Uratex National Caddies golf championship at the Capitol Hills course.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Korek Ka Dyan 2. Morning After 3. Voltes May
Race 2--1. Crisel Joy 2. Pingas
Race 3--1. Bronte 2. Zero Gravity 3. D Minnows 4. Private Pedro 5. Close Account
Race 4--1. Above All 2. Pilgrim 3. Headliner 4. D Optician 5. Imperial Act
Race 5--1. Yes Sir 2. Vinfa's Pride 3. Key to Heaven 4. Imus Emperor
Race 6--1. Respect the Ace 2. Patutina 3. Lucky El 4. Aya's Star 5. Sir Olizon
Race 7--1. Brenda Starr 2. Trail Blazer 3. Stable Beat 4. Everybodyhappy 5. Richie Rich
Race 8--1. With Distinction/Silakbo 2. Count Your Blessings 3. Holy King 4. Highly Connected
Race 9--1. Real Tough 2. Friendly Venture 3. Bulacan King 4. Red Thunder 5. Silver Cho Cho 6. Flying Strike

Guardo's team lean and mean

CEBU City is sending what could be its smallest delegation ever in a multi-event but expectations remain high as the Cebuano athletes vie for honors in the Batang Pinoy competition set Dec. 1-8 in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

Jonathan Guardo, chair of the Cebu City Sports Commission (CCSC), said the Queen City of the South will be represented by 71 athletes, 21 coaches and 11 officials in the annual meet for 12 years old and below.

The bulk of the athletes come from the five disciplines where Cebu City has strong chances of winning–athletics, boxing, gymnastics, taekwondo and dance sport.

"This is the implementation of our program dubbed 'Team Cebu City.' We have set priorities on events where we can excel locally and internationally. We are going all out on these disciplines because it's the only way we can produce quality athletes," said Guardo.

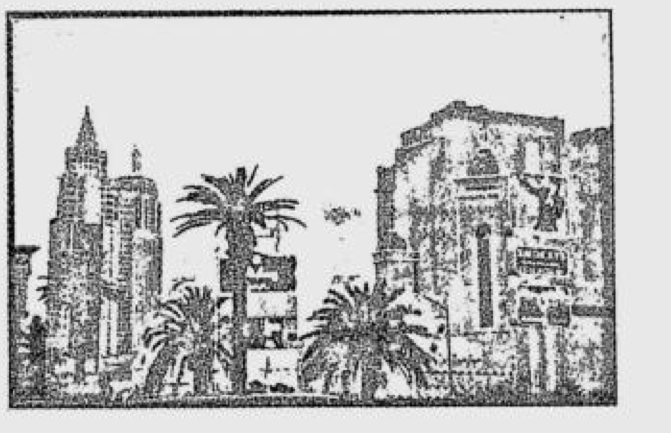
Team Cebu City is also sending athletes for badminton, chess, judo, karatedo, lawn tennis, table tennis, swimming and weightlifting.

Despite the cut in the number of athletes, Guardo is hoping to surpass Cebu's 6th- place finish last year where it managed a haul of 8 golds, 6 silvers and 14 bronzes.

"We want to bring quality medals rather than quantity. This is our way of boosting our potential of winning in bigger competitions abroad," said Guardo, who is also the chief executive officer and president of Osaka Iridology Incorporated.

Guardo said he will spare the Team Cebu City athletes from long sea travel that results in lesser level of performance in competitions. The delegation will leave for Palawan on Saturday via Air Philippines.

LA SALLE GREENHILLS ALUMNI
Route '70 Band will be featured during the La Salle Greenhills Alumni Association affair after La Sallians Benjamin Uichico (extreme right), Timothy Lee (middle) and the band's Celeste Pacana sign the contract for the Dec. 1 event. The occasion honors the school's outstanding alumni led by bowler Paeng Nepomuceno, basketball coach Jong Uichico and public relations practitioner Arsenic Lacson. Others in photo are Ernesto Singson III and Primaverosa Asuncion. The Kuya Center home for streetchildren is one of the event's beneficiaries.



Reflecting on Time | Pedro Almodóvar

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GENTLEMAN' S CUP

'Pacto' Iloilo leader

ILOILO–The Streaker was at it again yesterday as Robert Pactolerin went on a rampage with an eagle and three straight birdies on the last five holes for a five-under-par 65 and a one-stroke lead in the opening round of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit here.

Pactolerin, who has made a name on Tour for his big explosions, got himself skyrocketing to the top of the standings with his closing blitz and lead the assault on the Iloilo Golf and Country Club which yielded 12 rounds of even par or better.

The former Philippine Open champ was nowhere near the lead with no birdies for 13 holes until he eagled the par-5 14th, reaching the green with a 5-wood and made a four-foot putt for eagle. Pactolerin got so fired up by that eagle that he rolled in a 12-footer for birdie on the next hole, made another from seven feet on the 16th then completed the trifecta from six feet on the 17th.

It was a bogeyless round, however, that hardly gave Pactolerin any cushion as a horde of contenders were right behind his back in this fourth leg of the pro Tour bankrolled by the foundation of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and San Miguel Beer with the support of WG&A Super Ferry.

Peter Minoza, seeking to followup the recent National pro-am victory of his brothers Raul and Paul, was in second with a 68 with hometown favorite Richard Sinfuego, the red-hot Carito Villaroman and Rodolfo Cuello shooting 67s.

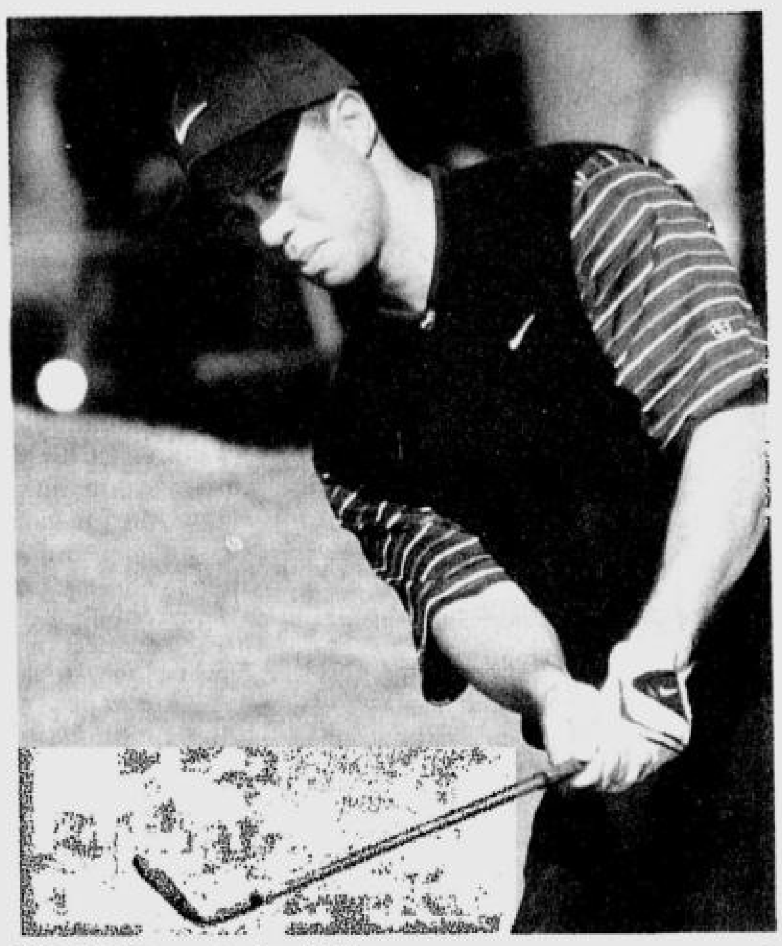
Juvic Pagunsan, the reed-thin Southeast Asian games gold medalist out to test the mettle of the pros, barged into the title picture with a scrambling 68 that put him in a tie for sixth with pro Danny delos Santos.

Benjie Magada was the eighth player to break par with a 69 while brand new pro Angelo Que joined veterans Noli Kempis, Danny Fortusa and Edwin Estrera at level par 70.

"Siyempre tingnan natin kung anong ibigay ng Diyos, maganda rin kung makabawi," said Pactolerin, who narrowly missed ending a three-year drought when he lost to Sinfuego in a marathon five-hole sudden-death playoff last month for the third leg crown at the Canlubang north.

Pactolerin's last victory came in the the 1999 UBX Manila Open at Wack Wack.

Sinfuego, whose family is working either as caddies or umbrella girls in the club, spiked his round by holing a bunker shot for an eagle on the sixth that started his rally from early bogeys on the second and third holes. *Jong Arcano*



WOODS: One eagle, four birdies.

AP

Woods back, posts 6-shot lead with 66

By Jaymes Song
AP Sports Writer

POIPU BEACH, Hawaii–Masters and US Open champion Tiger Woods shot a 6-under-par 66 to take a three-stroke lead over Justin Leonard in the PGA Grand Slam of Golf.

Davis Love III and PGA Championship winner Rich Beem opened with a 72 Tuesday in the 36-hole event for the year's major champions.

With Woods winning two majors and British Open champion Ernie Els withdrawing from the event, Love and Leonard gained invitations based on their finishes in the majors.

Woods, who is seeking his fifth consecutive Grand Slam title, put pressure on his opponents early en route to his bogey-free round. He made the turn at 31 to take a two-stroke lead over Leonard and Love.

Woods' front nine included an eagle on the 524-yard No. 2 and birdies on Nos. 4, 6 and 7. He played remained steady on the back nine, and he added a birdie on the 537-yard 14th hole.

On the eagle, Woods blasted a 343-yard drive and hit an 8-iron within 25 feet of the cup. He sank the putt, drawing a roar from the gallery.

Leonard drew within a stroke of with a birdie on No. 11, but Woods got a stroke back three holes later. Leonard then carded his first bogey on No. 17 by lipping a 3-foot putt.

In balmy and relatively calm conditions at the 7,081-yard oceanside Poipu Bay Golf Course on the island of Kauai, Davis had three birdies on the front nine. But he ran into trouble on the backside, bogeying four times, including three of the final four holes.

Beem opened his round with a birdie on the 428-yard, par-3 first hole, but lost a stroke on the 209-yard third after his approach shot landed in the right bunker. He parred the next 10 holes, added a birdie on No. 14 and a bogey on No. 16.

While Love, Leonard and Woods went with their traditional golf attire, Beem went Hawaiian style–to the extreme.

He wore golf shoes with a hula dancer airbrushed on one side and palm trees on the other. It complemented his untucked floral aloha shirt and his driver head painted in a colorful Hawaiian print.

But it was Woods who caught the crowd's attention by continuing his dominance.

Woods this season became the first player to win both the PGA Player of the Year and Vardon Trophy honors for the fourth straight year. He also topped the money list for the fourth straight year with $6,912,625 on the PGA Tour.

Woods won last year's Grand Slam by finishing with a record 12-under 132 total for a three-stroke victory over David Toms.

The winner will receive $400,000 from the $1 million purse.

Dampol-Pulilan tops at N'woods

THE ROYAL Northwoods Golf Club Inc. in Bulacan successfully staged the first Northern Luzon Inter-town over the weekend with the Dampol-Pulilan team running away with top honors and Bocaue's Lito Ramos winning the individual title.

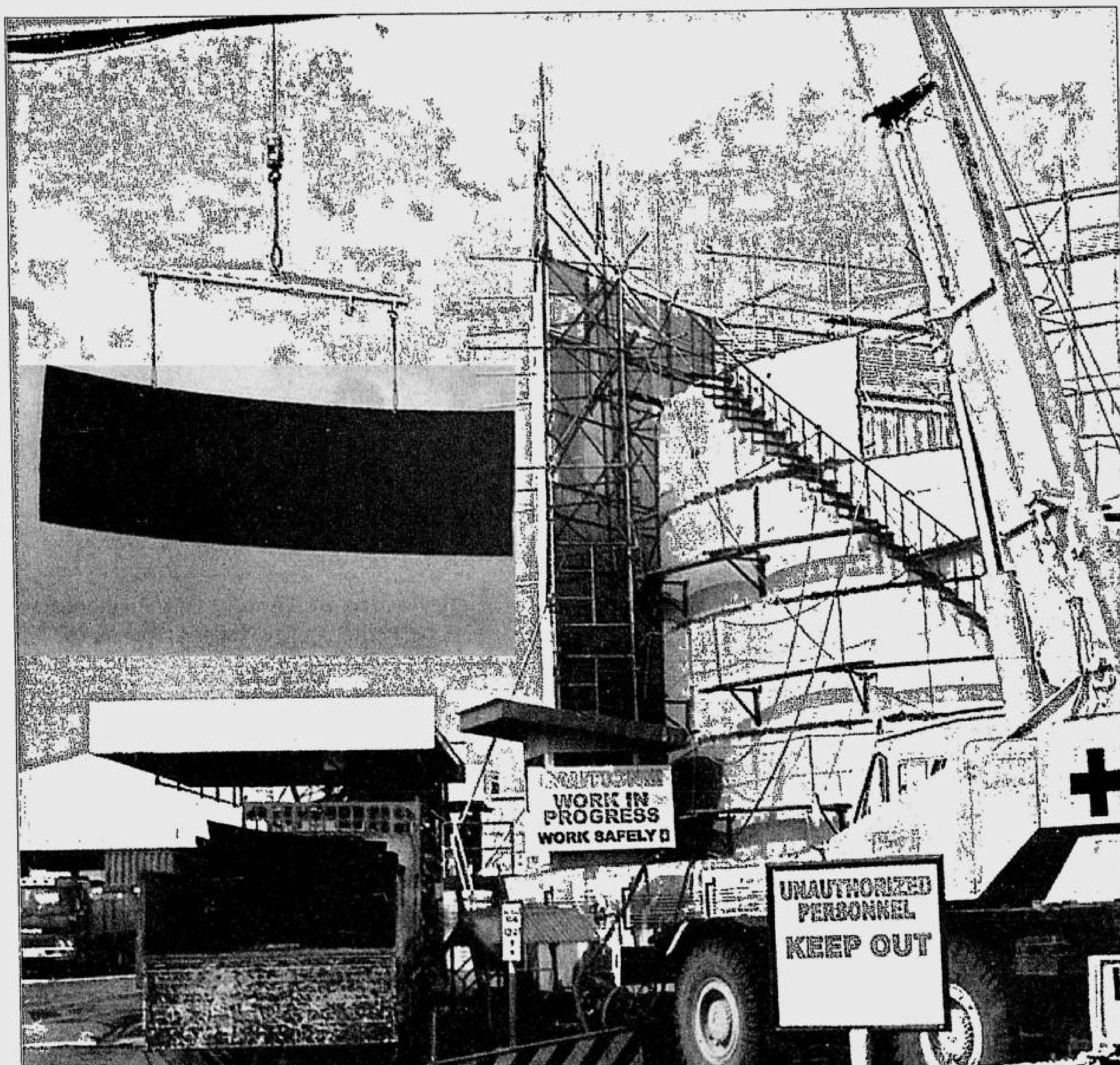
August Peralta combined with the Uy siblings Garry, Henry and Jerry to tally 253 points and beat the Pilar-Bataan squad for the crown in the tournament that featured 50 teams from various towns in Luzon.

The Inter-town expanded version of what used to be the Bulacan Inter-town, according to club general manager Antonio Pancho. He added that the big success of the event will inspire them to stage a bigger one next year.

Pilar-Bataan, made up of Jimmy Bustamante, Bobot de Jesus, Jovel Liwanag and Ed Santos, scored 238 to finish just one point ahead of the Angeles-Pampanga team which was represented by CJ Tayag, Jun Juan, Johan Santos and Boy David.

Ramos registered the highest point total of 89 with his rounds of 47 and 42 but could only lead his Bocaue team to fourth place.

Ramos' teammates were Dominador Santiago, Santiago Lopez and Ben Perez.



11 DOWN, 17 TO GO.

In line with our commitment to the City of Manila and the Department of Energy, we have cleared out a large portion of the Pandacan Terminal to pave the way for a green buffer zone. In a span of two months, 11 tanks have been removed -- almost 40% of the committed 28 tanks -- without disrupting the supply of fuel to the public. We have taken great care to make sure that while we reduce the terminal as promised, we continue delivering fuel products to Metro Manila and outlying provinces. The vision for a better Pandacan is thus taking shape. Soon, a clean and green leisure park will emerge, making our facilities more than just a terminal. This is our commitment. We will deliver.

In support of Buhayin ang Maynila program

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E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
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Tension mounting over PTA takeover

A VISIBLY moved Nixon Kua is swarmed by employees of the Philippine Tourism Authority who have vowed to resist the ouster of their chief.

By Jerome Aning and Carlito Pablo

ABOUT 200 employees of the Philippine Tourism Authority yesterday blockaded the office of General Manager Nixon Kua to prevent his recently appointed replacement from taking over.

Members of the Alliance of Dedicated Employees of PTA (Adept), as well as PTA officials, marched to Kua's office and held a noise barrage around 10 a.m. yesterday in a show of support for their beleaguered chief.

The protest was hastily assembled after the employees learned that Kua's replacement, former Makati City councilor Dean Barbers, had entered the Department of Tourism building on T.M. Kalaw Street in Ermita, Manila.

Barbers, a son of administration Sen. Robert Barbers, was supposed to replace Kua, a protegé of Lito Banayo, former political adviser of then President Joseph Estrada.

Barbers briefly met with DOT Secretary Richard Gordon and stayed at the office of the DOT National Capital Region director, a post Barbers' elder brother Lyndon, now Surigao del Norte governor, once held.

Adept president Felicitias Benting said they would continue to hold protests everyday at noon and prevent Barbers from going to the general manager's office.

Benting said they would continue to recognize Kua as their chief, unless the courts rule against Kua's contention that he could not be dismissed without cause since his term would expire in 2006.

But according to Malacañang, the term of Kua, who was appointed to the PTA during the term of President Estrada, has expired on Oct. 2, 2002.

In an official statement, presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz disputed Kua's claim that he cannot be removed from office except for cause.

Cruz noted that Presidential Decree 564, as amended by PD 1400, which created the PTA, provided for a six-year term for the PTA general manager.

But Cruz pointed out that "the reckoning date for the commencement of the term of office of the first PTA general manager after the issuance of PD 1400 shall be the date of effectivity of PD 1400, and not on the date of the first appointment."

Thus, according to Cruz, the "appropriate starting point" of the term of office of the PTA general manager is Oct. 3, 1978.

Cruz said the terms of office of the PTA general manager can be

TENSION/A24

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3 suspects in Selecta scion abduction held

By Tina Santos

THREE men, including the alleged mastermind in the abduction of the 34-year-old scion of the owner of Selecta Feeds, have been placed under custody by the Caloocan City police.

Supt. Dionicio Borromeo, chief of the Caloocan Police intelligence and investigation unit, identified the suspects as Felix Avila Jr., a former supervisor at Selecta Feeds and tagged as the mastermind; Romero Gonzales, a foreman in the same firm; and Jay dela Cruz, company driver.

Selecta Feeds operations manager Danilo Bautista, identified as a son Selecta Feeds owner Don Mauro Arce by another woman, was forcibly taken by four heavily armed men early Tuesday morning in Bagumbong Dulo, Barangay 171, Caloocan.

Borromeo said those who abducted Bautista could be hired killers.

It was gathered that prior to the incident, Bautista had been receiving death threats since last October through letters, miniature coffins and live M16 ammunition.

"Since Avila was dismissed from his post as supervisor of the firm, every transaction regarding the supplies and products have since been passing through Bautista's approval," Borromeo said.

Borromeo explained that Bautista had since earned the ire of a number of employees inside the firm because of deals which involved huge amounts of money.

Bautista was on his way home aboard his Mitsubishi Adventure (WDZ 932) with driver-helper Joemel Esperga when a blue L-300 van cut their path a few blocks away from the Selecta Compound on Susana Road, Barangay 170, North Caloocan.

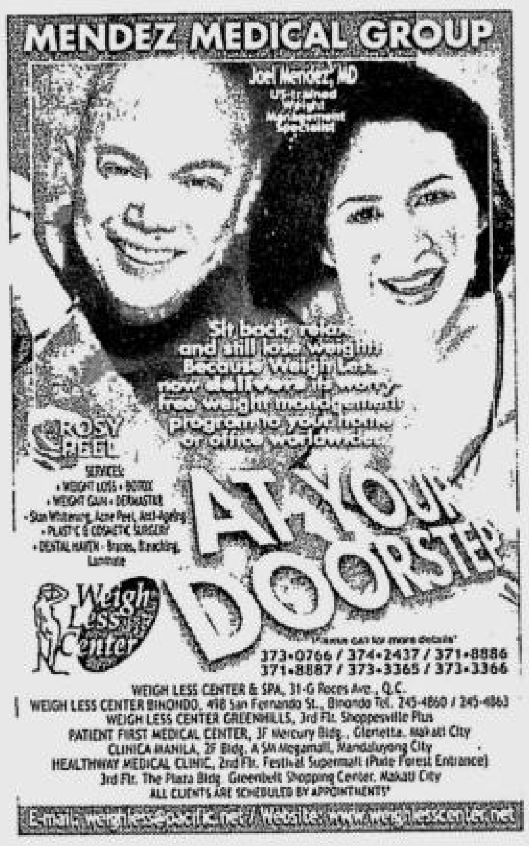
Four men, armed with M16 rifles and high-caliber pistols, came out, dragged Bautista out of his vehicle and shoved him into the van, before speeding away toward Bulacan, police said.

Esperga told investigators that he got a good look at all the alleged abductors before he was pistol-whipped and left behind.

But Borromeo said police are not striking out other angles on the case as there are other people who may want to settle a score with Bautista.

"We are ruling out the kidnap-for-ransom angle since the abduction could be a result of an internal conflict in the firm," Borromeo said.

Avila, Gonzales and Dela Cruz are set to undergo polygraph tests at Camp Crame in Quezon City on Monday.



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Joel Mendez, MD
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All in day's work

THERE was instant panic when residents in Barangay Batasan, Quezon City spotted a labeled cardboard box left on the rail of a bridge.

Written on the box was the warning: "*Huwag galawin, delikado* (Don't touch, dangerous)."

PO1 Ricardo Llena of the CPD- Station 6 in Batasan Hills said they received a call from a frantic resident at around 12:30 a.m. the other night. The caller was afraid that the box might contain a bomb.

Members of the CPD Special Weapons and Tactics unit in full battle gear were immediately dispatched to the scene.

The area was cordoned off.

When one expert gingerly opened the box, the team was assailed by a totally expected explosion: the foul smell of human waste.

The stink bomb was a a practical joke.

Despite the foul air, members of the SWAT team manage to heave a sigh of relief. "It's all in a day's work for us," laughed one of the SWAT operatives. *Alcuin Papa*

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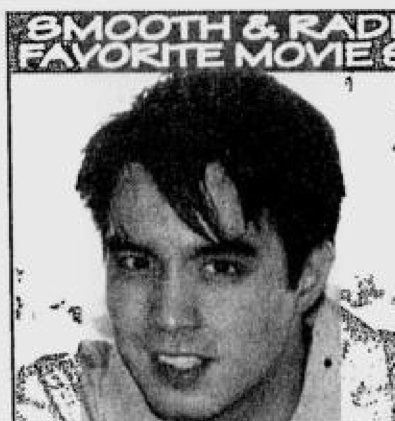

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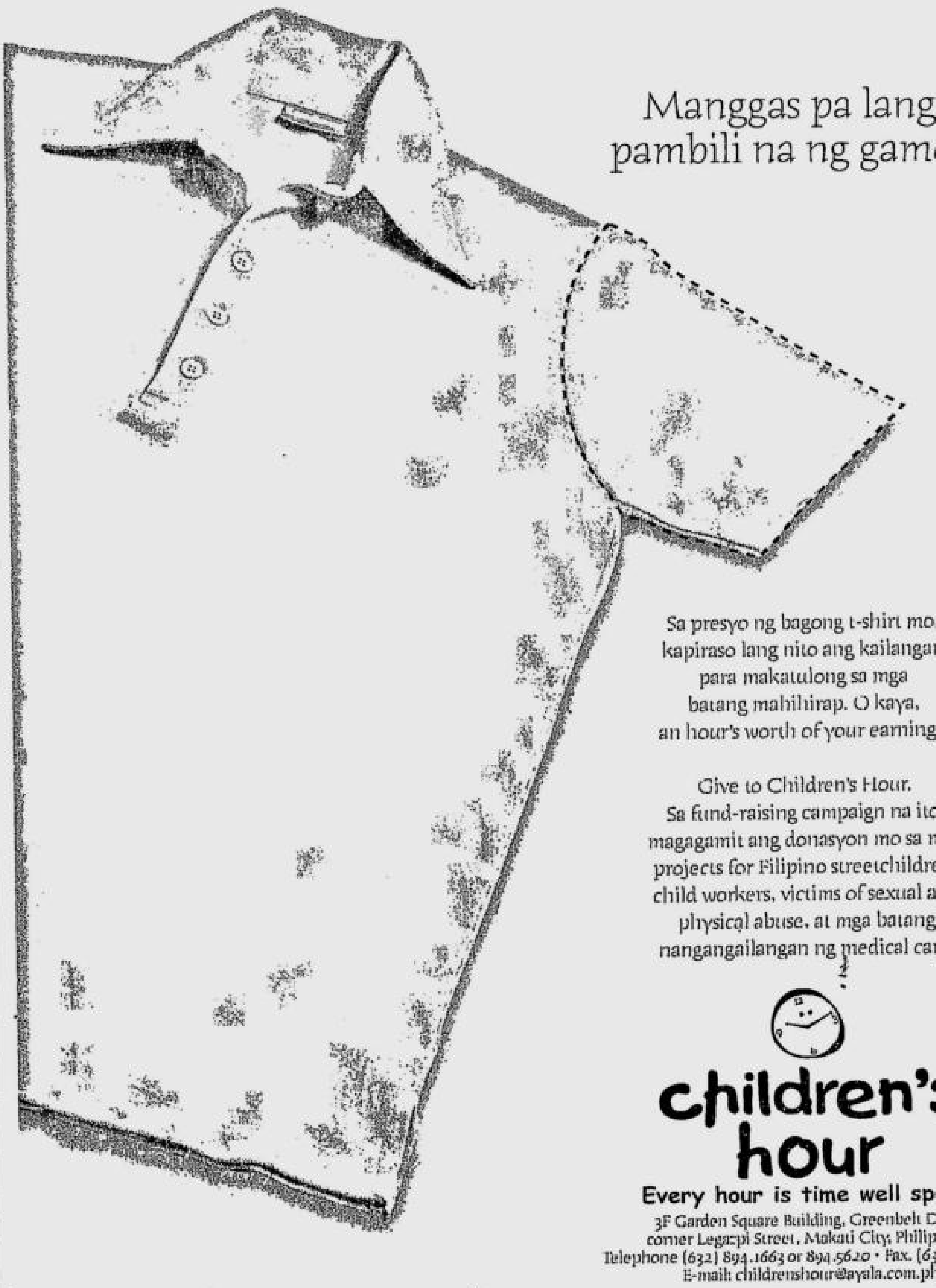

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People want depot out now

By Jerome Aning

CLAIMING they have been "betrayed" by the city politicians, residents of Pandacan, Manila are mobilizing to drive away the oil depot by themselves.

"We believe that our lives and properties remain in danger despite the oil companies' down-scaling of their operations," said resident Vladimir Alarique Cabigao.

Cabigao, 29, an accountant and law student, is organizing an assembly on Saturday of Pandacan residents, barangay authorities, religious and civic groups and non-government organizations that are opposed to the depot.

The gathering is expected to press for the complete closure of the depot, which Cabigao said is the real desire of Pandacan residents.

Last June, the city government was supposed have enforced an ordinance shutting down the depot.

But the country's three big oil firms—Shell, Caltex and Petron—succeeded in "softening" City Hall's stand and reached an understanding with Mayor Lito Atienza.

The firms agreed to reduce their operations by as much as 40 percent, create a "green" buffer zone around the facility and set up a common depot.

The agreement virtually suspended the implementation of the ordinance. It was later ratified by the City Council, which is dominated by Atienza's allies.

The mayor contended that the downscaling is sufficient, for the meantime, to address concerns on the security in the depot and the safety of the residents .

But Cabigao, who lives on Beata Street—just behind the portion of the depot used by Petron—disagrees.

"If the city officials and the oil firm executives really believe that Pandacan is now safe, why don't they come and live here with us?" he told the INQUIRER.

Despite the reduced operation, Cabigao said the depot still poses a danger to densely-populated Pandacan because it remains a potential terrorists' target.

Actors, models warned, fined

FOUR more actors and models would have to suspend their careers in the country or face arrest if they continue to work without the necessary papers.

Foreign artists Anne Curtis, Nadine Schmidt, Jeffrey Rodriguez and Greg Martin were given a month by the Bureau of Immigration to file for a special work permit to legitimize their employment in the country. They were given the same deadline to file their petition for recognition as Filipino citizens or for a permanent resident visa. Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo slapped a P100,000 fine each on the four artists, who appeared before the BI yesterday. *Blanche S. Rivera*

Is GMA afraid of Bibit?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

CEBU Customs Collector Billy Bibit's private army of 40 or so armed bodyguards poses a big question: who pays them and how much?

Everybody knows that those 40 armed men that Bibit brought to Cebu with him are not customs employees. Former soldiers who are members of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansa Makabansa or RAM, those armed men draw their pay from Bibit.

At say, P5,000 a month for each one of them, that's P200,000 monthly for all of them. This excludes money for their food and board.

* * *

Maintaining a private army is no joke. Ask any politician who maintains armed bodyguards.

Bibit is not a politician. Most politicians are filthy rich, that's why they got elected in the first place. Bibit is only a customs official whose salary is, I'm told, not more than P15,000 a month.

Where does Bibit get the money to pay those 40 armed men monthly?

No wonder Bibit looks the other way–to put it kindly–while rampant smuggling of rice and cars is going on.

* * *

Bibit is probably the only government functionary, who is not a politician, who maintains a big private army.

What are those armed bodyguards for? Is he afraid of smugglers? Does he have many enemies?

Even the Armed Forces chief of staff or the chief of the Philippine National Police or former presidents of the republic don't have that big number of security people.

* * *

Perhaps I can guess why Customs Collector Bibit keeps such a big private security force: he's scaring his superiors in Manila out of their wits.

In effect, he's telling him to leave him to do as he pleases in Cebu or he would sic his dogs of war on them.

You see, all those armed men around Bibit were involved in several coup attempts during the Aquino administration.

* * *

Perhaps it's not only his customs superiors that he's to intimidating with his armed group, but the Macapagal-Arroyo administration itself.

Imagine what would happen if Bibit declared tomorrow that he was withdrawing his support from the present administration!

What would happen? His armed bodyguards would probably rise up in arms against the government. And they would be backed up by other members of RAM, as well as the membership of El Diablo or the Guardians Brotherhood of which Bibit is also an officer.

* * *

Is this country being held hostage by a group of armed mercenaries led by a minor government official? "Mercenaries" because they're neither active soldiers nor rebels.

Doesn't anybody in government have the balls to tell Bibit to stop his shenanigans in Cebu?

He's become a sacred cow.

* * *

I bet you, Bibit will deny that he maintains a private army and that he's not in cahoots with rice and car smugglers.

He will even trumpet his accomplishment of having exceeded the target revenue collection for the Port of Cebu.

Nobody denies that he's the only customs collector who has been able to meet his target collection.

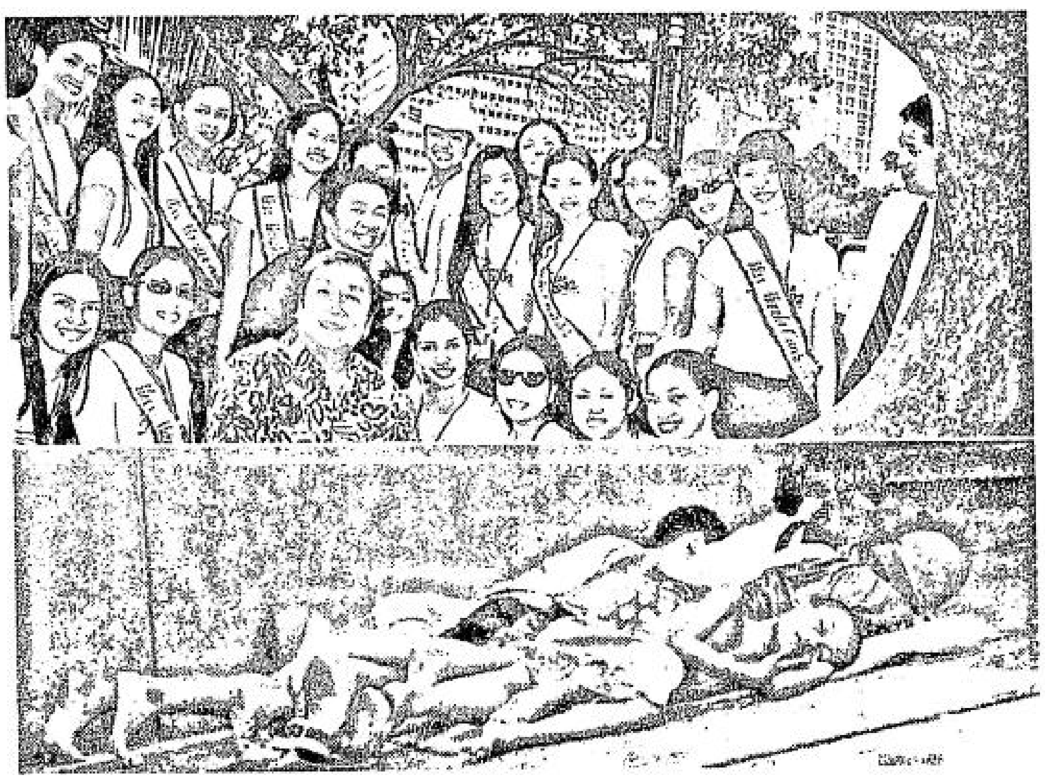
* * *

But at what price to the government?

Sure, he exceeds his collection target. But why don't his superiors look into the rampant smuggling of rice and second- hand, right-hand-drive cars from Japan? These cargoes are misdeclared, so the right amount of taxes and duties is not paid on them.

Millions and millions of pesos are lost by the government to smugglers of rice and second-hand cars at the Port of Cebu.

"*Sa totoo lang,* Mon, *nagsipuntahan na ang mga* smugglers *sa Cebu dahil maluwag doon* (The truth is, smugglers have gone to Cebu because they're v.ery lax there)," said a customs official who didn't want to be identified for fear of reprisal from Bibit.



DARKNESS & DELIGHT
A delighted Manila Mayor Lito Atienza (top photo) basks in the sun surrounded by shapely contestants for the Miss Manila title; while cold, hungry street kids steal sleep in a doomed, dark corner in the city of cruel contrasts and crying conflicts.

Police officer killed, policewoman shot in Muntinlupa hotel

By Christian V. Esguerra

A CENTRAL Police District officer was killed while a policewoman and a suspected car thief were injured during a bizarre shooting at a high-end hotel in Muntinlupa City Tuesday afternoon.

SPO1 Noe Montiel suffered multiple gunshot wounds in the body and died just outside Vivere Suites in Filinvest, Alabang at around 4 p.m.

PO2 Marie Jane Navarro of the Muntinlupa police was hit in the leg while 27-year-old Ethel Bartolome, the alleged car thief, suffered a superficial wound in the back, investigation showed.

Navarro and two other officers went to Vivere Tuesday afternoon following a complaint by one Myra Lagumen that suspected car thieves were at the hotel, said case investigator PO3 Rey Quizon.

The officers found Bartolome and her cousin, SPO1 Montiel, who both agreed to go with them to the police headquarters.

Outside the hotel, Quizon said the complainant's husband, Leo, and their son, Bong, confronted Montiel and Bartolome.

The son then pulled out a gun and fired at the group, investigation showed.

Turing Subido passes away

VETERAN photographer Arturo "Turing" Subido, a three-term president of the Press Photographers of Philippines and formerly of the Inquirer, passed away on Monday.

SUBIDO

His remains lie in state at 957 Gen. Malvar, Barangay Don Galo, Parañaque City. Interment will be on Saturday, 2 p.m. at the Manila North Cemetery. Subido, who covered Malacañang for nearly a decade, is survived by his wife Salud, children Marivic, Vangie, Matet, Abel and Junior.

MetroBriefs

Robbers take boy's scooter

STUDENT John Vincent Gatdula, 15, lost more than P165,000 in cash and valuables to two robbers who passed themselves off as policemen, in Tondo, Manila yesterday. The culprits also forced the boy to treat them to a snack at a burger joint. SPO1 Celso Tan said suspects Antonio Imutan, 30, and Marciano C. Bacani, 34, both of Sta. Cruz, Manila, took Gatdula's P90,000 dark green scooter, P35,000 gold necklace, a cell phone worth P35,000 and P5,000 in cash. Tan said Gatdula, of Tondo, Manila, was driving his scooter with a friend when the suspects blocked their path, identified themselves as lawmen and threatened to detain the boy when he failed to show his driver's license at around 10:30 p.m. Sunday on Juan Luna Street. The culprits were arrested Tuesday night while they were trying to have the scooter repainted in a shop on Mayon Street in Quezon City. *Philip Tubeza*

J Lo robbed in Ermita

ENTERTAINER Jennifer Lopez was robbed while she was on board a jeepney in Ermita, Manila before dawn yesterday. Lopez, 23, of Ermita, and her friend Lilibeth Concillas, 27, a guest relations officer and resident of Paco, Manila, were robbed by two men armed with blades, according to a report from the Western Police District Station 5. The namesake of the popular Latin actress and her friend lost a total of P11,500 in cash and cell phones to the culprits. Police said the victims were on their way to Harrison Plaza when the suspects struck at around 3:45 a.m., on the corner of M.H. Del Pilar and Pedro Gil Streets. *Philip Tubeza*

Trader found dead

BUSINESSMAN Maximo Cua was found dead in Quezon City yesterday, police said. The victim's daughter, Cherrelyn, found Cua hanging by the neck on the second floor of their warehouse at around 5:20 a.m. Senior Insp. Rowena Garado of the Central Police District's Scene of the Crime unit said aside from the ligature marks on the neck, there were no other external injuries on the victim's body. But the policewoman said they have yet to rule out foul play in Cua's death. *Alcuin Papa*

Woman killed in Quiapo

DESPITE her pleas, Joanne Damelites, 30, was mercilessly shot dead in Quiapo, Manila on Monday, police said. Witnesses said they saw Damelites, of Sta. Cruz, Manila, talking excitedly with the two men before she was killed at around 4 p.m. at the corner of Globo De Oro and Elizondo streets in Quiapo, said Detective Athos De Quiros, of the Western Police District. De Quiros said people at the crime scene scampered to different directions when the gunshots rang out. He said the suspects escaped in the confusion. Investigators said the woman was shot in the back of the head, in the chest, and in the left side of her body. *Philip Tubeza*

Tension mounting . . .

From page A23

logged as follows: Oct. 3, 1978 to Oct. 2, 1984; Oct. 3, 1984 to Oct. 2, 1990; Oct. 3, 1990 to Oct. 2, 1996; Oct. 3, 1996 to Oct. 2, 2002; and Oct. 3, 2002 to Oct. 2, 2008.

"Since Kua was appointed on Nov. 7, 2000, his term of office shall be the fourth term in the table above or from Oct. 3, 1996 to Oct. 2, 2202," Cruz said.

But Kua described Malacañang's argument as "legal re-engineering."

Kua's legal counsel, former solicitor general Ricardo Galvez, maintained that his client "is entitled to a six-year term of office."

"When the law is clear, there is no need for a hairsplitting interpretation of the law," Galvez said in a statement.

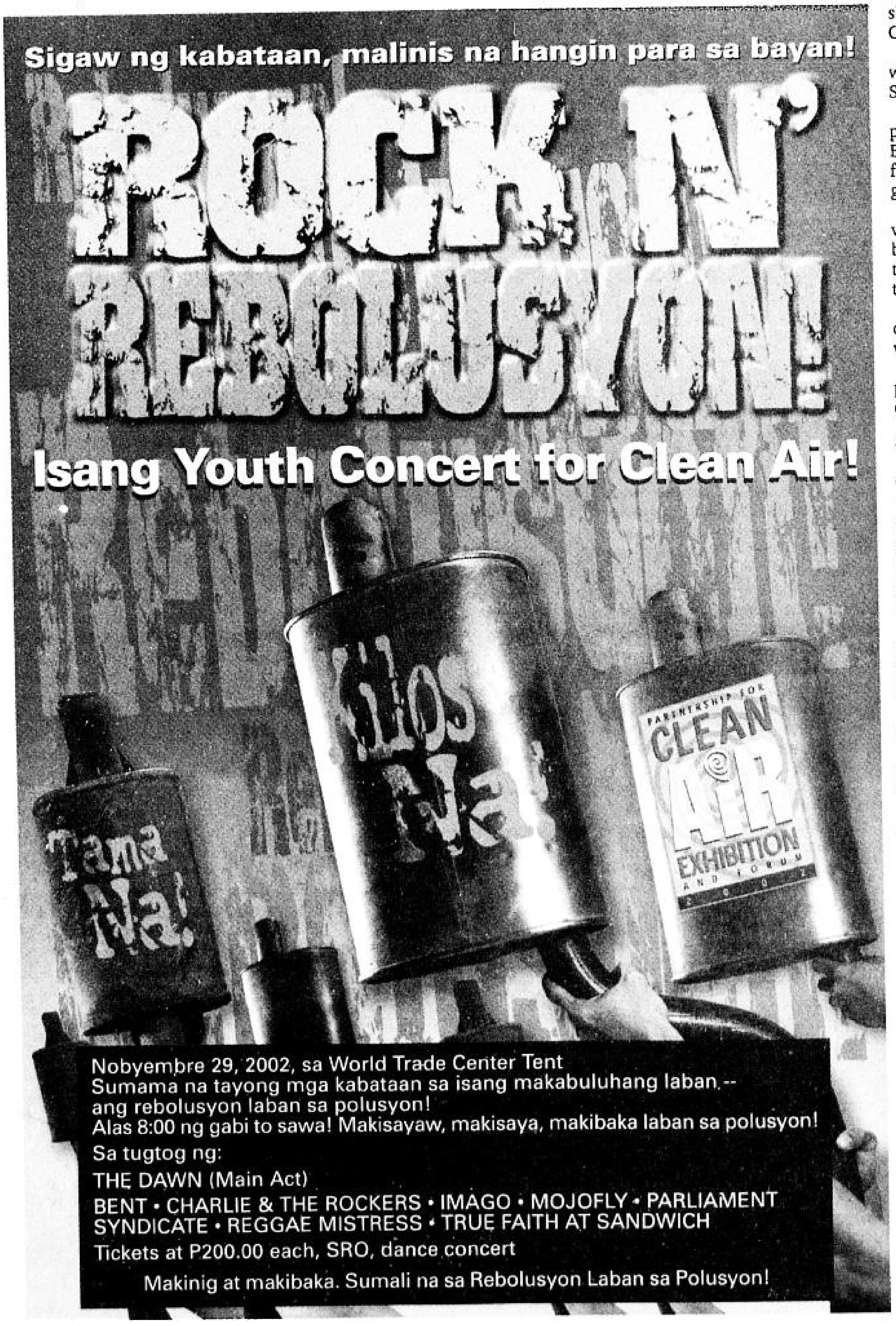
Kua also debunked Gordon's allegations that he was fired because of his slow implementation of tourism projects.

Gordon's statement triggered speculation among DOT employees that it was the tourism secretary who masterminded Kua's ouster.

"My record speaks for itself; if I were a laggard, would I enjoy the support of my fellow public servants in the PTA?" Kua said.

Red Cross dinner

SONGBIRD Regine Velazquez will be the guest performer during the farewell dinner of the VI Asia Pacific Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement tonight at the Manila Hotel. Regine will perform for the Red Cross for free as part of her contribution to the regional 5-day meet which started last Sunday. The conference is participated in by some 200 leaders from 57 Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in the region, including the Middle East, Europe and USA.


Sigaw ng kabataan, malinis na hangin para sa bayan!
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Nobyembre 29, 2002, sa World Trade Center Tent
Sumama na tayong mga kabataan sa isang makabuluhang laban,--
ang rebolusyon laban sa polusyon!
Alas 8:00 ng gabi to sawa! Makisayaw, makisaya, makibaka laban sa polusyon!
Sa tugtog ng:
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BENT • CHARLIE & THE ROCKERS • IMAGO • MOJOFLY • PARLIAMENT SYNDICATE • REGGAE MISTRESS • TRUE FAITH AT SANDWICH
Tickets at P200.00 each, SRO, dance concert
Makinig at makibaka. Sumali na sa Rebolusyon Laban sa Polusyon!

Kevyn Lettau holds one-night concert

POP-JAZZ diva Kevyn Lettau takes on the live stage once more as the latest guest performer in Joey@ 92.3's concert series.

Kevyn brings with her a repertoire of songs lifted from her eponymously titled debut album to her breakthrough collections like "A Simple Life," "Another Season," "Universal Language," "The Language of Flowers," the refreshingly unique "Police" and the acoustic-laden "Little Things."

Kevyn will perform tonight at the NBC Tent in Bonifacio Global City.

The local concert audience is bound to embrace Kevyn as they did a few years back when Joey@92.3 brought her to Manila.

Achieving wide commercial and critical acclaim for her songs like "Heart of My Hearts," "Far Away," "Shower the People," "Bridges" and "Sunlight," Kevyn initially gained recognition for her work with Sergio Mendes and Brasil.

She has also gained remarkable success as a product endorser and songwriter-producer, working with popular Latin and jazz personalities.

Tickets to "Feel the Sunlight—Kevyn Lettau Live in Manila" are at P1,200 and P923 at all National Bookstore and Ticketworld outlets.

For inquiries and reservations, call 891-5610 or NBC at 882-1622.

LETTAU

TV . . .

From page A29

Event."

Then, count down to Christmas with the TV premiere of "A Johnny Bravo Christmas" and "12 Tiny Christmas Tales" for Christmas Eve. So, tune in to "The Night Before Christmas" on Cartoon Network.

Then, on Dec. 25, celebrate Christmas Day and stuff your stockings with "A Cartoon Network Christmas," a 24-hour extravaganza of favorite toon stars in a wide range of Christmas capers.

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: What do you plan to take up in college?

Starlet: I like Tourism.

Host: Why do you like it?

Starlet: *Kasi*, I love to travel! Ever since I was small, *nakatira kami sa* Antipolo, *lipat kami ng lipat sa mga bundok doon!*

(Wow, *'yun pala and ibig sabihin sa 'yo ng* tourism!)

***

Host: People are so troubled these days— so many problems to face and solve. Is there any hope for Filipinos now?

Guest: Well, we need to be united. That's the only way for us to succeed in these hardened times!

(*Ay*, hardened times!)

***

Quizmaster: Who was the first Filipino Miss Universe?

Contestant: Armi Kuusela!

(No, Gloria Diaz.)

***

Quizmaster: *Sa aling sport sikat si* Christine Jacobs?

Contestant: "Eat Bulaga"!

(No, swimming!)

***

Quizmaster: How many years are there in a millennium?

Contestant: 100!

(No, 1,000!)

***

Quizmaster: *Ilan ang paa ng isang* biped?

Contestant: *Tatlo.*

(No, *dalawa lang.*)

***

Quizmaster: *Anong sport ang nilalaro sa* Wimbledon?

Contestant: Wimbledon!

(No, tennis!)

Sexbomb craze . . .

From page A28

son more meaningful as they prepare for a major concert at the Folk Arts Theater on Dec. 16.

The show will be presented as a benefit for GMA Foundation's "Give a Gift" campaign for the Christmas season.

A group of 300 children under the care of the leading Christmas charity will be entertained in a night of songs and dances with the Sexbomb Girls, who will be joined by other celebrities onstage.

The girls will also present gifts to all the invited 300 children, from the "Give a Gift" campaign.

The concert will give free admission to fans with downloaded Sexbomb mobile phone logos and ring tones through Smart Zed. Free concert tickets will be given away when the Sexbomb Girls do their mall shows.

Meanwhile, the girls' debut picture, "Bakit Papa?," is a wholesome comedy movie directed by Uro Q. de la Cruz. Also starring in the film are Jeffrey Quizon, Allan K, Wendell Ramos and Richard Gutierrez.

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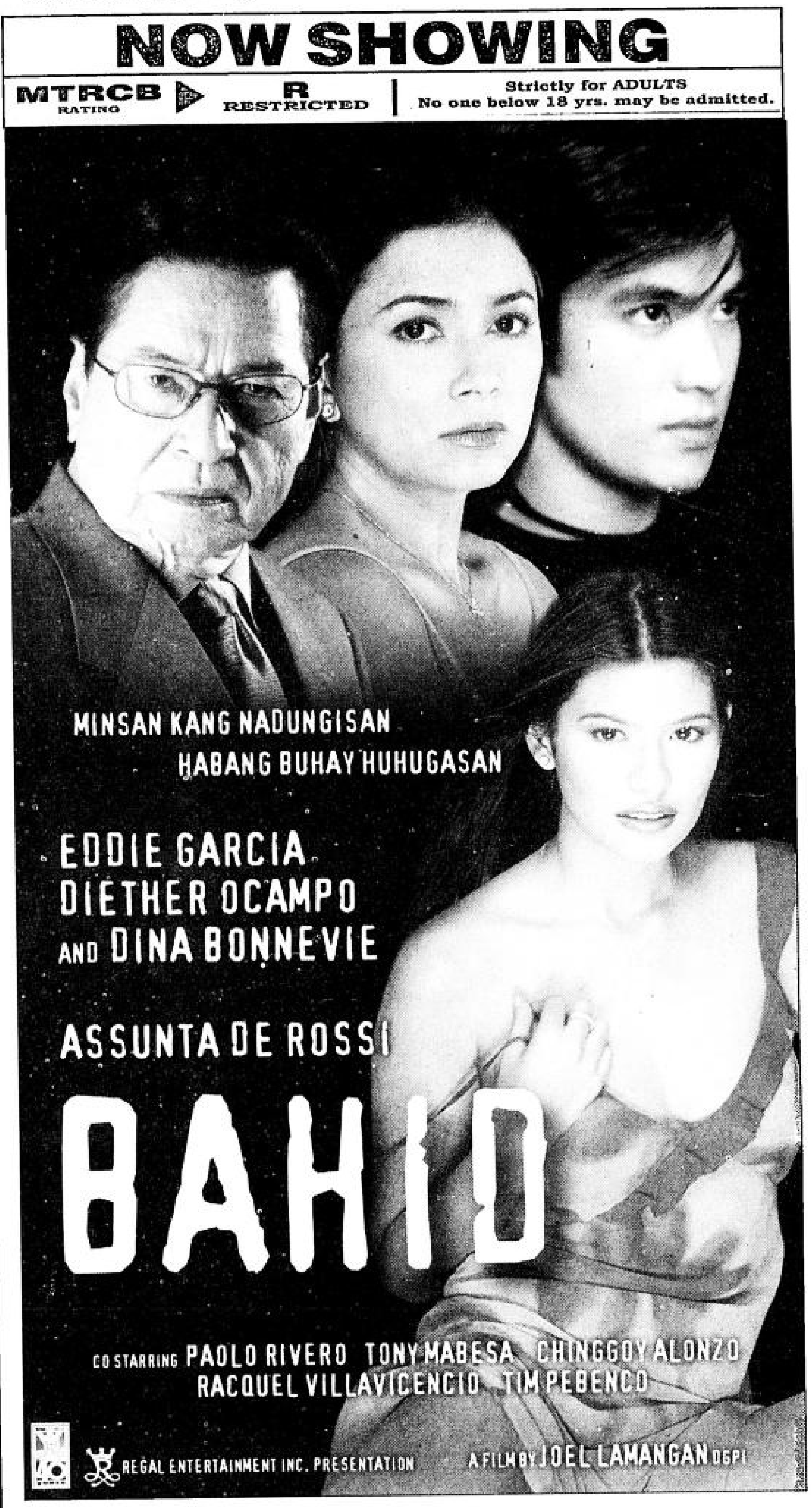
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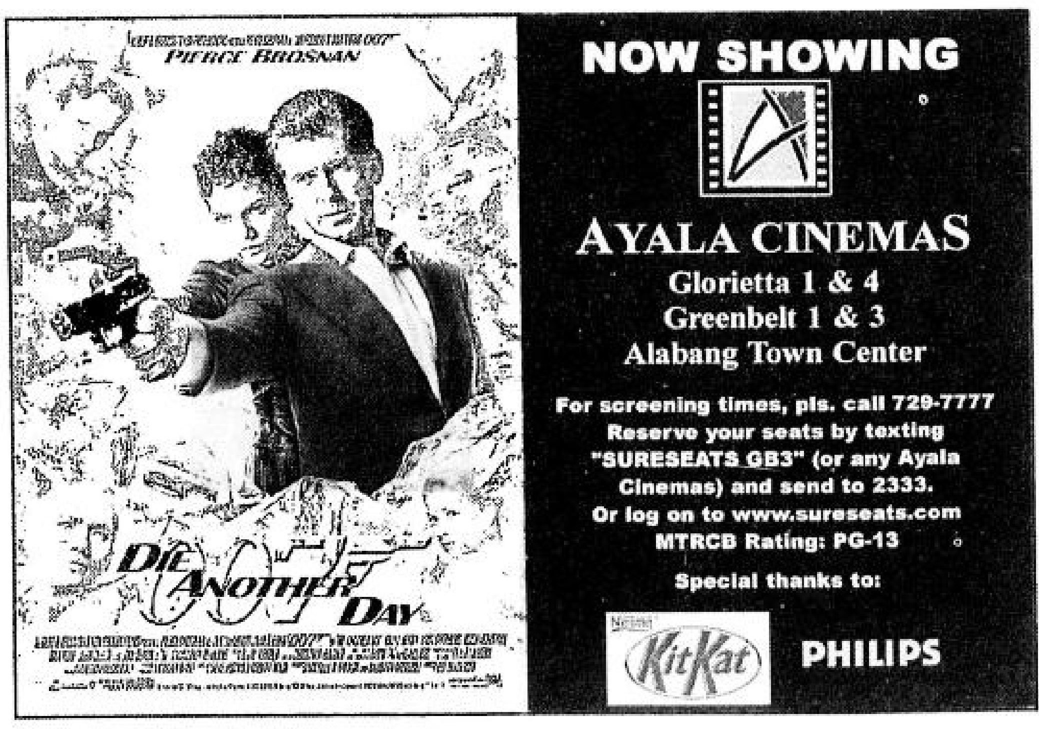
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DIE ANOTHER DAY	DIE ANOTHER DAY 11:40, 2:25, 5:10, 7:55, 10:40	SONGBIRD SINGS - REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV. 29-30 / DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 1:30, 4:50, 8:10, 11:30	DIE ANOTHER DAY
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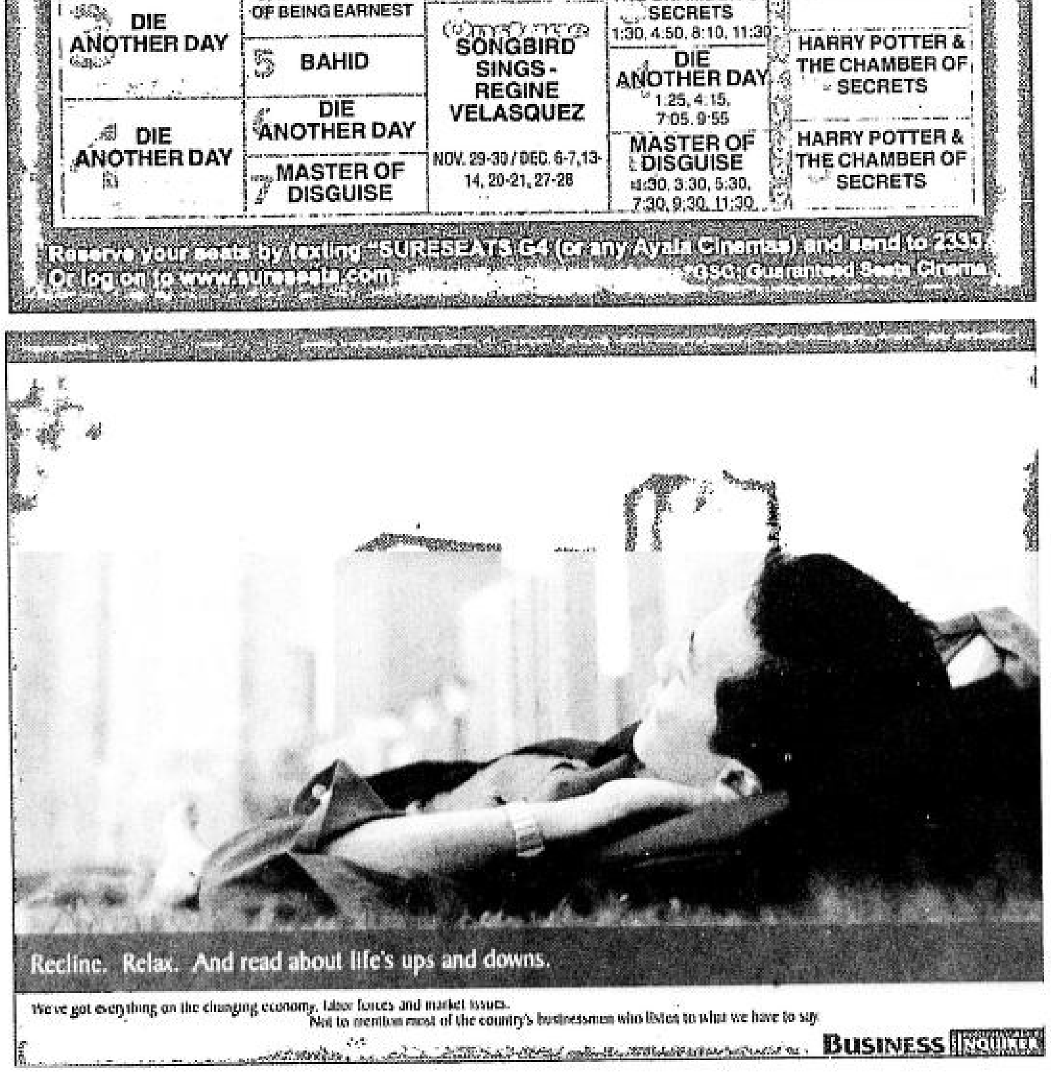
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BUSINESS INQUIRER

HOUSEHOLD NAMES. The Sexbomb Girls make good at every entertainment endeavor.

Sexbomb craze continues with Xmas album, movie

By Leah Salterio

THERE'S no stopping the Sexbomb Girls from successfully making it in every field of endeavor in the local entertainment scene.

After gaining ground on TV, where they first entertained audiences on GMA 7's daily noontime fare, "Eat Bulaga" and the weekly sitcom, "Daboy en Da Girl," the Sexbomb Girls became the toast of the recording scene with their debut album, "Unang Putok," under BMG Records. The CD is bannered by the chart-topping carrier single, "Bakit Papa?," which has also been adopted as the title of the group's movie debut under Regal Entertainment. Their other hit, "Pretty Little Baby," has likewise become a best-selling novelty tune. "Unang Putok" has been certified double platinum to date.

Phenomenal

As the year's most phenomenal breakthrough in Original Pilipino Music, the singing Sexbomb Girls take advantage of their popularity by releasing a Christmas album, "Wish Ko sa Pasko," also under BMG Records.

Who would have known that six feisty young ladies—Rochelle, Jopay, Monique, Yvette, Izzy and Weng—will become household names and pop idols?

The girl's wide appeal has brought them the good breaks, whether on TV, recording and the movies.

Regal Films matriarch Lily Monteverde lost no time in snapping up a film contract for the Sexbomb Girls.

And BMG Records, which veritably gambled with the debut album release, has proven that the Sexbomb craze is as strong as ever. Hence, the company decided to come out with a Christmas album.

Official album

BMG Records executive Vic Valenciano, who logged in several hours every night to supervise recording for the album, insists "Wish Ko sa Pasko" is the "only official Sexbomb Girls Christmas album available today." It is because many other Sexbomb-copycat albums have appeared in stores shortly after the release of the the girls' Christmas recording.

"Wish Ko sa Pasko" features 10 Christmas songs, including three original tracks penned by Lito Camo, the same guy who wrote the group's debut single, "Bakit Papa?"

Valenciano happily notes the album's carrier single and title track is now one of the most requested tunes on radio, competing for airplay with top local and international pop favorites.

Other selections in the album are "Feeling Christmas" and "Hapi Meri Christmas," which carry the trademark catchy beat of Sexbomb tunes.

The Sexbomb Girls also render their versions of traditional Christmas songs to the tunes like "Merry Christmas Darling," "Mamacita" and "Feliz Navidad."

Free concert

December will be loaded as far as the calendar of the Sexbomb Girls is concerned. Aside from promoting their Christmas album and movie, the girls are out to make the holiday sea-

SEXBOMB/ A27

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1. The theme of the BANDERA NG ATING BAYAN PHOTO CONTEST is the Philippine flag. Contestants should photograph the Philippine Flag in a unique or dramatic situation.

2. Submit photo entry in 8R format (8" x 10"), either black & white or full color, original and not previously published in any form of print media. Each entry must include the corresponding negative or transparency.

3. Contestants are required to fill out the official application form found in the tabloid, BANDERA, with their name, address, signature, contact number and attach three (3) clippings of the new BANDERA masthead.

4. Photocopies of the application form or the masthead will not be accepted.

5. Send entries to:
ANG BANDERA NG ATING BAYAN PHOTO CONTEST
c/o The Marketing Department
Inquirer Publications, Inc.
Yague St. Corner Chino Roces Avenue
Makati City 1205

6. Contestants may submit as many photo entries as they want, provided that each photo entry is accompanied by one (1) official application form and three (3) BANDERA mastheads.

7. PRIZES:
Prizes are as follows:
1st prize - P50,000, *2nd prize* - P20,000
3rd prize - P10,000, *and five (5) consolation prizes of* P2,000 each.

8. A contestant may win only once. Should one contestant win more than once, He/She will get the prize of higher value.

9. CRITERIA:
Composition: 30%
Uniqueness: 20%
Technical: 20%
Overall Impact: 30%

10. BANDERA reserves the right over all submitted photo entries. Entries will not be returned to their respective owners. By entering the contest, each entrant agrees that BANDERA may use his/her name or image for contest promotion.

11. Deadline for submission of entries is on 5pm of December 18, 2002. Provincial entries must allow one (1) week for mailing. BANDERA will not be responsible for any lost or delayed entries.

12. A panel of judges will determine winning photos with the presence of a DTI representative on December 20, 2002.

13. The list of winners will be published on the December 23, 2002 issue of BANDERA. Winners will also be notified by registered mail.

14. All employees of Inquirer Publications, Inc., and its affiliate companies, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest.

15. Winners should present winner's notice and two (2) valid IDs when claiming their prize. Prizes may be claimed in the following areas:

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16. Prizes not claimed within sixty (60) days after receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of Inquirer Publications, Inc. With prior DTI approval. Inquirer Publications will shoulder the 20% prize tax.

Promo period is from Sept. 23 to Dec. 18, 2002

See print ad in BANDERA for more details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3888, Series of 2002

Gina, Pinky, Angelu, real troopers in 'TVM'

DollyWood

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I HAD the time of my life watching the opening night of "The Vagina Monologues" (Filipino version) at the Music Museum last Friday.

Ma cherie amie **Pinky Amador** (who is part of the cast with **Gina Alajar** and **Angelu de Leon**) invited me to the show.

The first time I came across the show's title, I was instantly intrigued. I heard that it has premiered in over 30 countries and has been translated in over 25 languages.

"The Vagina Monologues" is written by award-winning playwright, poet, activist and screenwriter **Eva Ensler**. Due to the rousing success of "TVM," it has ushered in "V-Day," a global movement to stop violence against women.

The New Voice Company (producer of "TVM" in the Philippines) headed by **Monique Wilson**, mounts worldwide V-Day events here, Singapore and Hong Kong annually.

"The Vagina Monologues" is precisely what its name suggests, a series of stories based on interviews, in which women talk about the most secret part of their bodies.

To lift the words of "TVM" director **Andrew Vergara** from the souvenir program, "There had been no precedent in our country, or even Asia for such a straightforward, no-holds barred theatrical discourse on traditionally sensitive, sacred and/or taboo subjects such as female sexuality, women's rights, rape, orgasms, genital mutilation, the clitoris, etc."

Pinky was truly awesome. The former "Miss Saigon" star has proven once again that she is a world-class talent, although she does not really need to prove anything at all.

When it comes to thespic skills, Pinky is already an icon. The amazing thing about this woman is that she's not one who would sit on her laurels. Instead she keeps making audiences sit up and listen. She did that with much pizzazz at "TVM."

Pinky not only made the audience all-ears but all-heart, as well. Her candid and honest portrayal of different kinds of women who are trying to come to terms with their sexuality hit the audience bullseye.

Thunderous applause and non-stop roars reverberated at Music Museum after each of her monologues. The most hilarious part was when Pinky showed the different types of moaning such as the moan of a virgin, a multi-orgasmic woman, divas, shy types, new age women, etc. Every act was complete with gyrations and facial contortions.

I teased Pinky after the show, "So when are we going to compare moaning tones?"

Considering that I've kept my chastity belt securely fastened (by choice and not by circumstance) for quite sometime now, Pinky's performance suddenly provoked me to reconsider the call of the wild.

Gina Alajar was fantastic, too. To think that she's more into movie and TV roles, the multi-awarded actress made the shift to theater acting effortlessly in "TVM."

Acting on stage is a bit more demanding than acting on-cam. In theater, there are no retakes and you got to try harder to please the audience who are right in front of you, watching your every move. Any heckling from the crowd could spoil even the most seasoned actor's performance. But Gina elicited no heckles for "TVM." She earned only deafening bravos and hurrahs that night.

"TVM" is Angelu de Leon's first professional theater production. For a tyro, Angelu gave quite a convincing performance. Although her monologues were not as complex and kilometric as Pinky's and Gina's, she nonetheless shows much promise in theater. Her tempestuous love affairs have apparently moulded her into a more mature actress with less inhibitions.

The single mother (who has two love children) has already gone through the whole gamut of emotions that comes with love and pain's bittersweet package. She's more attuned to her inner workings and that gives her a wider leeway for self-expression.

Prior to the show, Angelu's mom told me the script had to be revised completely the day before opening night as ordered by "TVM" playwright Eve Ensler.

I didn't quite get the reason behind the last-minute changes, but I guess that's Ms. Ensler's prerogative.

Pinky, Gina and Angelu are such troopers that I wouldn't have had any inkling about the script's sudden variation if Angelu's mom didn't let me in on it. The three actresses were not simply mouthing their lines nor reciting them as their memory dictates. They relished every line with every beat of their hearts and every desire of their flesh.

Riki ticks

I HAD a blast at **Riki Kwek**'s belated birthday bash at Dish last Thursday. Riki and I fondly call each other "Night Queen twins," since we are both such party animals.

We also have the same husky voices. Riki teased, "Hey Girl! We should have a show together!"

I shot back, "With our combined bubbly nature we might end up outtalking our guests."

The party was just a small gathering of Riki's few chosen friends and I'm more than delighted to be counted in as one of them.

A number of my male friends have a big crush on Riki, so I ribbed her some more, "Ms. Crush ng Bayan, when will you decide to answer one of your ardent suitors, huh?"

Riki giggled and said, "I'm still in the process of elimination. Besides I'm kind of wary to fall in love again because I get so consumed by it. My world begins to revolve around my boyfriend. I got to concentrate on work for now, but you'll never know! When it hits you, it hits you and in my case, it hits real hard!"

We both laughed uncontrollably as we swapped girly stories of lost and found loves with every Tequila shot we took.

Everyone in the party was toasting to Riki's many charms. She's not just the life of the party. She turns life into one big party.

Personal

HAPPY birthday to one person who taught me most of love's painful yet necessary lessons, **Dukie**.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare @yahoo.com

DO THE BUM. Heart Evangelista and Danilo Barrios.

Young show biz heartthrobs model trendy garment wear

BUM, the trendy line for young people, recently launched its newest models, young stars Danilo Barrios for Bum Equipment and Heart Evangelista for Bum G.

The two show biz personalities embody the look, personality, lifestyle and attitude of the new generation—young, hip, cool, high-spirited, clean and fresh.

Danilo and Heart will sport the Bum look for the holiday season, with the spirit of the '70s. A burst of colors, the mix and match of prints and patterns, Bum's new look is all about radical ideas and uncoventional concepts.

In line with its new approach to creative expression, Bum recently launched "Peace of Art" shirt competition, open to everyone from 15 years old and above. Participants are required to play around with Bum's basic white round-neck shirt, printed with new generation images.

"They have to dress up the shirt in the most creative way. Using the print as base, the manner of dressing up the shirt is limitless," explained Bum's in-house designer Arnold Galang.

Participants can join the male or the female category. Grand prizes for both categories is P100,000.

Prizes for each category include a trip to Hong Kong (three days and two nights), with US$200 pocket money for the first consolation prize, P30,000 and a plaque for the second, and P20,000 and a plaque for the third.

Bum Equipment is also donating P1 for every "Peace of Art" shirt to Saling Lahi, an organization involved in youth rehabilitation and development.

Judging of entries is on Dec. 17. Winners will be announced Dec. 18. Awarding of prizes will be held at Bum Equipment's gala fashion show, Dec. 20 at Glorietta 4 Park.

New MTRCB head: 'I don't intend to break public trust'

By Marinel R. Cruz

NEWLY APPOINTED Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) officer-in-charge Dennis Manicad is not at all bothered by the fact that, after replacing the controversial Marilen Dinglasan, people will now be closely watching his every move.

He has nothing to worry about, he said, because he "plans to do only the right thing."

"Why should I be worried? I don't intend to break public trust," Manicad told the INQUIRER in an interview last Tuesday. "People can always come up to me if they feel that I'm doing something wrong or illegal."

Manicad was sworn in to office by Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last Nov. 8. His appointment came a week after Ms Macapagal relieved chief censor Dinglasan and two other top officials from their posts.

Dinglasan's highly publicized squabble with MTRCB employees started when the latter filed graft and corruption charges against her before the Office of the Ombudsman last September.

The charges against Dinglasan included grave abuse of authority and usurpation of the functions of the board, unauthorized use of a government vehicle, nepotism, unnecessary hiring of a law firm, falsification of public documents and the arbitrary use of MTRCB funds.

Apprehensive

Manicad is aware that some MTRCB officers and employees were apprehensive when they first heard of his appointment.

"I perfectly understand their fears," he said. "But so far, dialogues with the employees have been very productive."

In fact, MTRCB employees and board members recently sent a letter to the President recommending him as MTRCB chair, Manicad said.

"I have many plans for the MTRCB but I can only do so much because I am not the chair," said Manicad. "But I intend to make the most out of my term as OIC."

As MTRCB head, Manicad wishes to concentrate on the need to regulate theater, movie and TV publicity materials.

"But the MTRCB is only a small office and could not monitor all publicity materials on its own," he said. "We ask concerned Filipinos to please report to the MTRCB any advertisements that they feel are too suggestive or provocative for public viewing."

Manicad, a lawyer, writer and former law professor of the Manuel L. Quezon University, is the youngest MTRCB head at 36.

Heading a government agency like the MTRCB is a very complex job for Manicad. But he is confident that his stint as board member for almost ten years now will greatly help him in his aim to be an efficient leader.

"I go for reasonable regulation. That is my battle cry," he explained. "But one has to understand that it is difficult to strike a balance between the right to freedom of expression and the right to public morals."

Former president Fidel Ramos appointed Manicad as member of the MTRCB board in 1992.

Professor

Dennis, son of well-known Ramos supporter lawyer Conrado Manicad, took the bar exams in 1991 and passed it in 1992. He practiced law for two years and worked as a professor for MLQU for three years.

"Although I enjoyed teaching, it took so much of my time," Manicad shared. "I resigned because I didn't have the time to read all those test booklets. I was always late. I really gave the college dean a hard time."

He also hosted the public service program "Hanep Buhay" on Channel 13 with his dad, Pinky Marquez and Dyords Javier.

Manicad's father was a former Lakas-NUCD secretary general. The elder Manicad ran for congressman in Laguna's third district during the 1998 elections but lost.

The Manicads hail from San Pablo, Laguna.

The new censors chief previously worked as corporate secretary for the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) until the time Joseph Estrada became president in 2000.

At present, Manicad works as consultant for the College Assurance Plan (CAP) and has written two books or modules on criminal and civil law for the school.

Now that he is boss to some 90 MTRCB employees, Manicad makes it a point to start his day early. He leaves his house in La Loma, Quezon City at 8 a. m. and starts working at the MTRCB office at 9.

"I usually go home at around 7 p.m." he said.

On weekends, he loves to spend time with his wife of seven years, Norma, and their daughters Danica Denise, 7, and Arielle Denise, 4.

YOUNGEST CENSORS CHIEF. Lawyer Dennis Manicad has many plans for the board. RANDY HORMILLOSA

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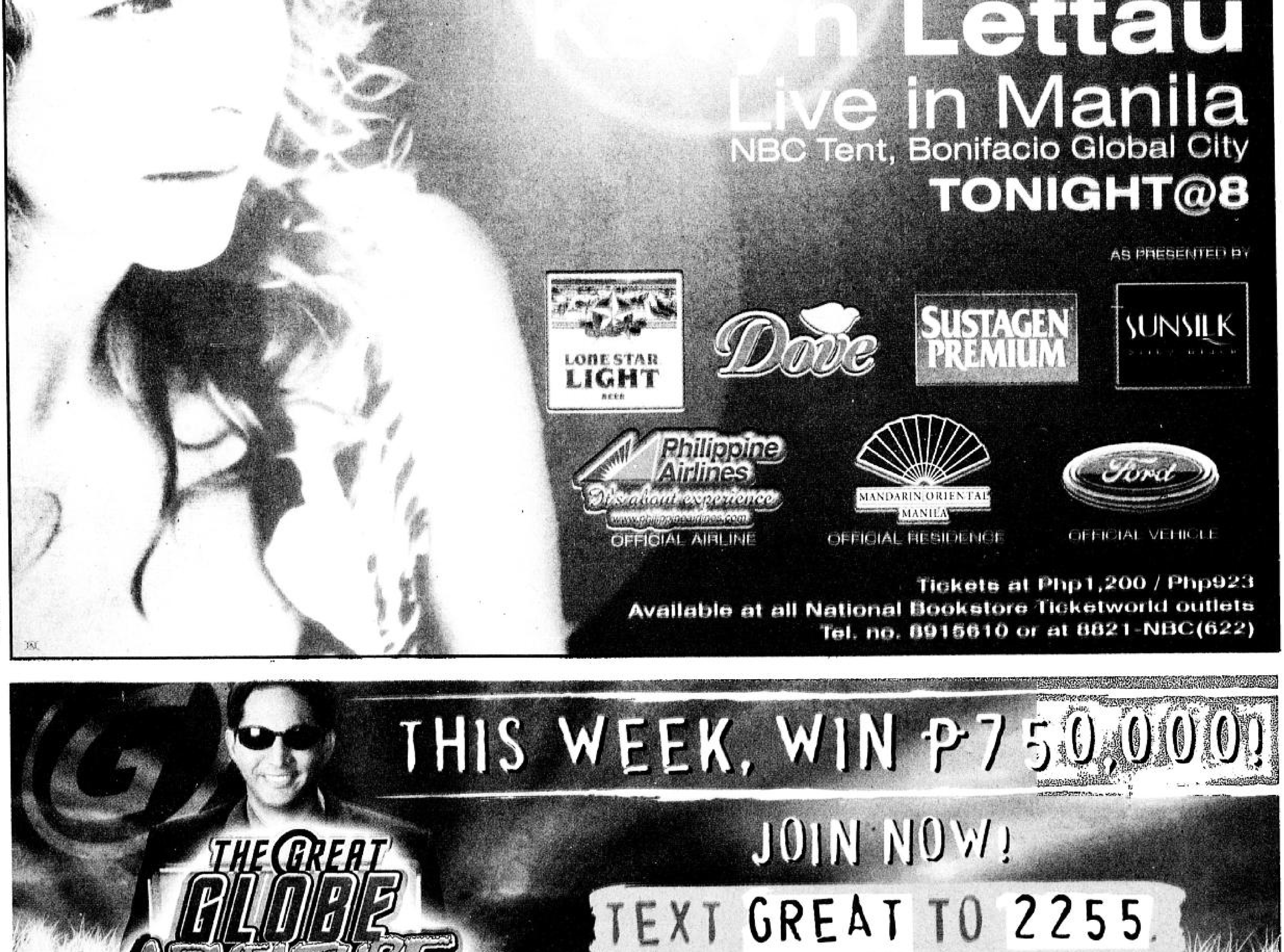

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MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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2	BAHID
3	HARRY POTTER

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING
3	RESERVE
4	BAHID
5	HARRY POTTER

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242.8400

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	BAHID
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	THE TRANSPORTER
7	HIBLA

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242.8400

1	KASIPING
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	KASIPING
2	BAHID
3 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	HIBLA
2 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
3 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	BAHID

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	BAHID
2 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	RESERVE FOR AMA
2	RESERVE FOR AMA
3 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BAHID
2	CHANGING LANES
3 (DOLBY)	HARRY POTTER
4 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
3	BAHID

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
2	BRAZEN WOMAN
3 (DTS)	KASIPING
4	BALLISTIC ECK VS' SEVER

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3 (DTS)	KASIPING
4	HARRY POTTER
5	TOUCH

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	KASIPING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	KASIPING

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	HARRY POTTER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DTS)	BAHID
4 (DOLBY)	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SEX FILES
2	HARRY POTTER
3	HIBLA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BAHID
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
3 (DTS ES)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang

Tel. 85035-71 to 72

DIE ANOTHER DAY

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	MASTER OF DISGUISE
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	BAHID
7	KASIPING
8	CLOCKSTOPPERS

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	KASIPING
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	CLOCKSTOPPERS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	HIBLA
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	MASTER OF DISGUISE
9	BAHID
10	KAILANGAN KITA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	CLOCKSTOPPERS
2	MASTER OF DISGUISE
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	HARRY POTTER 2
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	BAHID
9	DIE ANOTHER DAY
10	HIBLA
11	GHOST SHIP
12	KASIPING

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	MASTER OF DISGUISE
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	KASIPING
8	HIBLA
9	DIE ANOTHER DAY
10	KAILANGAN KITA
11	DIE ANOTHER DAY
12	BAHID

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	CLOCKSTOPPERS
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	HARRY POTTER 2
7	KASIPING
8	KAILANGAN KITA
9	BAHID
10	DIE ANOTHER DAY
11	MASTER OF DISGUISE
12	HIBLA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	KASIPING
4	BAHID
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	HARRY POTTER 2
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	HARRY POTTER 2
2	MASTER OF DISGUISE
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	HARRY POTTER 2
7	BAHID
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY
9	CLOCKSTOPPERS
10	KASIPING

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	CLOCKSTOPPERS
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	BAHID
8	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	GHOST SHIP
2	CLOSED
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	BAHID
5	HARRY POTTER 2
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	CLOSED
8	SWEET HOME ALABAMA

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	KAILANGAN KITA
5	CLOCKSTOPPERS
6	BAHID

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	BAHID
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER 2

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	BAHID
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	KASIPING

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	BAHID
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	SPIDER
4	HARRY POTTER 2
5	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

WATCH OUT
FOR THE
OPENING ON
NOVEMBER 29, 2002

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	TWO TIMER
3	HARRY POTTER 2
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City

1	HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 11:00 MF/2:00/5:05/8:00/ 10:40 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY 11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD
CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls

call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	DIE ANOTHER DAY 10:50; 1:30; 4:10; 6:50; 9:30 LMF; 11:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	BAHID
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	MASTER OF DISGUISE
8	KAILANGAN KITA
9	KASIPING
10	CLOCKSTOPPERS

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema P65 tlevel cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	KASIPING
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	BAHID
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY
7	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Metro East - 682- 8193 / 8280
Marcos hway

1	KASIPING
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	HIBLA
7	DIE ANOTHER DAY
8	BAHID

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	CLOCKSTOPPERS
3	BAHID
4	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	KASIPING
8	HIBLA

Malabon 285- 7671 / 7675
Citisquare

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	KASIPING
3	BAHID
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Star Mills- 875- 1927
Sn Fernando, Pamp. 961- 5318 / 5270

1	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	BAHID
4	CLOCKSTOPPERS
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
6	DIE ANOTHER DAY

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
3	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	KASIPING
6	BAHID

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
4	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
5	HIBLA
6	CLOCKSTOPPERS

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
2	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	DIE ANOTHER DAY
5	BAHID
6	GHOST SHIP

email rmc@netasia-mnl.net
http //www robinsonsmovieworld com

txt-a-movie: CTC<_>MOV<_>RMW+branch code

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GALE	MLA	MEP	NOVA
IMUS	STARMILLS	BACOLOD	ILOILO
IMUS	STAR	BAC	ILO

Send to 2333 Globe / 225 Smart

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

TV specials on Star World

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

JUST in time for the Yuletide season, the Star World Channel has lined up a Christmas package of TV treats:

"Miss World 2002" leads off at 10 p.m. on Dec. 7, with candidates from 110 countries expected to compete.

"1 Giant Leap" is a truly special production that took three years to do. The musical show has a unique vision: to capture and share the fusion of music, image and spoken word from some of the World" most influential artists—**Robbie Williams, Neneh Cherry, Michael Stipe, Dennis Hopper** and Bollywood actress **Asha Bhosle**.

Three years ago, **Jamie Catto** and **Duncan Bridgeman** embarked on a global journey that included Senegal, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, India, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom, equipped only with laptop computers, a digital video camera and their vision of a world united in music.

"The Making of '1 Giant Leap'" will be aired at 10 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6, while the show itself will be telecast at 10 p.m. on Dec. 13.

Another musical special, "Mark Anthony: I've Got You," is a Christmas Eve treat, at 9 p.m. on Dec. 24. The pop/salsa star's first network television special includes songs from his second English-language album, "Mended," and his self-titled triple-platinum album.

Following right after at 10 p.m. "Celine Dion: A New Day Has Come," an encore telecast of music after three years. Guests are Destiny's Child and **Brian McKnight**.

A special with a strong Christmas flavor, "A Fare to Remember," will be screened at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 25. It's about a high-powered business executive (**Challen Cates**) who takes on an assignment on Christmas Eve, knowing she is to get married right after the holiday. Arriving at the Seattle airport, she has to get to Los Angeles but discovers that all flights are cancelled.

She hires an obnoxious cabbie (**Malcolm-Jamal Warner**) to drive her to L.A. The cabbie turns out to be rather endearing, while she tries not very successfully to keep her cool. The TV movie also stars **Jerry Springer** and **John Ratzenberger**.

Finally, Star World has two year-ender specials: "Divas Las Vegas" will be telecast at 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 31. **Shakira, Celine Dion**, the Dixie Chicks and **Cher** represent different genres of music at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

And at 10:15 p.m. Dec. 31, "American Bandstand" stages its 50th anniversary celebration. The dazzling TV special combines live performances and vintage video clips that salute the longrunning show's contributions to pop music.

Performers include **Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Alanis Morrissette**, Kiss and Cher.

Cartoony Christmas

EVERY weekend between Dec. 1 and 22, the Cartoon Network features Santa Claus in a variety of Yuletide scenarios. A cartoon character will also pose as Santa on each episode of the Christmas programs. Join the network's "Spot the Fake!—A Cartoon Network Christmas

TV/ A25

Arkdia marks first year

ESCALANTE

ALIW Awards' most promising female artist Bituin Escalante takes centerstage at 9 tonight at Arkdia Bar on Remedios St., Malate, to highlight the venue's first anniversary celebration.

The concert, "May Isang Bituin," showcases Bituin's impressive singing prowess.

She recently won the best interpreter award in the "Himig Handog" song festival, where she sang Soc Villanueva's composition, "Kung Ako na Lang Sana," which won the grand prize.

Bituin will wear an Oskar Peralta gown for the show. The special concert is presented by Slimmers' World, Dimsum and Dumplings, Mule and Bio-Essence. For tickets, call Mike Ynfante, Arkdia's operations manager, at 400-9974.

Araneta Center

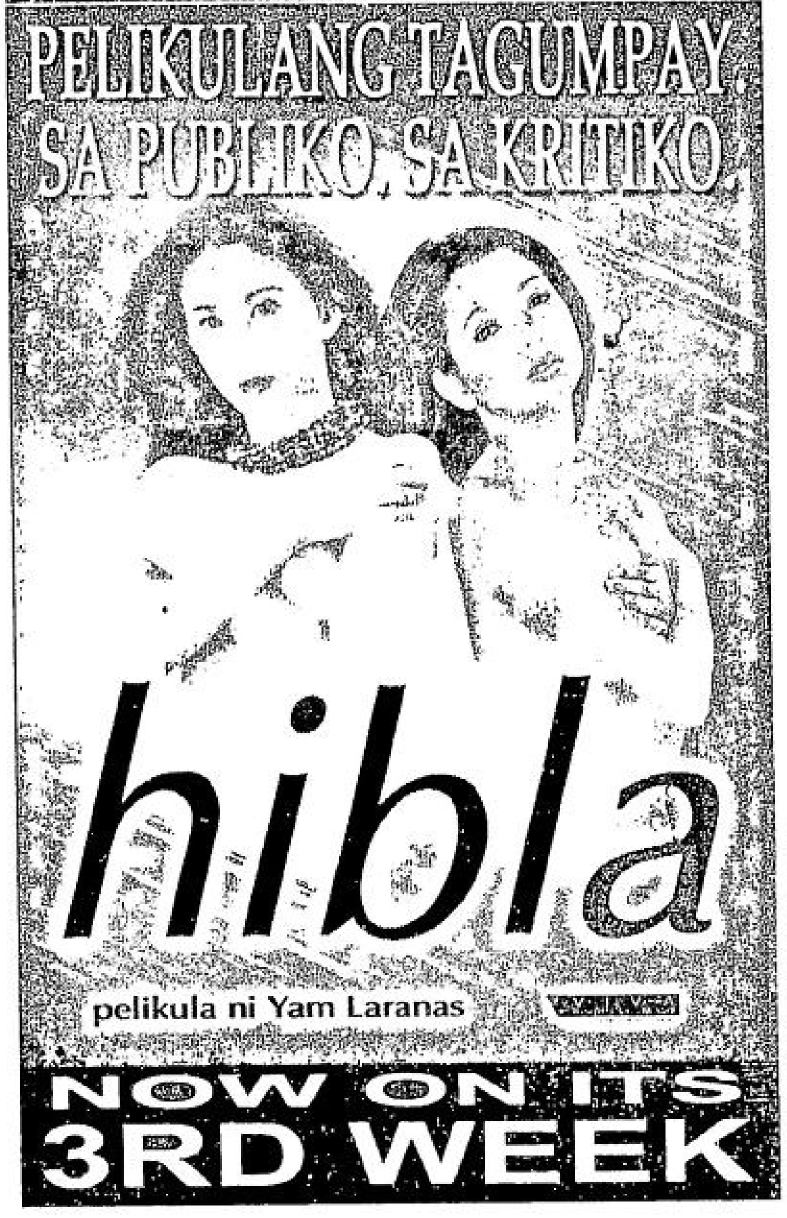
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	KAILANGAN KITA
Ali 2	BAHID
Ali 3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
Ali 4	HARRY POTTER 2
Ali 5	DIE ANOTHER DAY
Ali 6	TRANSPORTER
Ali 7	HIBLA
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	KASIPING
Farmers 2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
ARANETA COLISEUM	
DEC. 1	PBA GAMES
DEC. 4	ANAK LAUNCH
DEC. 9 & 11	NCA DERBY
ELEPHANT WORLD	
NOV. 28	10 AM / 2 PM / 5 PM
NOV. 29	10 AM / 3 PM
NOV. 30	10 AM / 1:30 PM / 5 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO / BIRTHDAY GIRL
ODEON	DIE ANOTHER DAY
ODEON-2	BIGLANG LIKO / TALAHIB AT ROSAS
ROBEN	KASIPING
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	FREAK / BOURNE IDENTITY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	KASIPING
REMAR	DIE ANOTHER DAY
REMAR-2	KASIPING
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HIBLA
B	GISING NA SI ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	FRENCH ANIMATION FESTIVAL
CINEMA-2	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BAHID
CINEMA-2	KASIPING
CINEMA-3	KAILANGAN KITA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	BAHID
CINEMA-6	BIYAHERA
CINEMA-7	BRAZEN WOMAN
CINEMA-8	GISING NA SI ADAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-12	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-14	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-15	BAHID
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LNES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

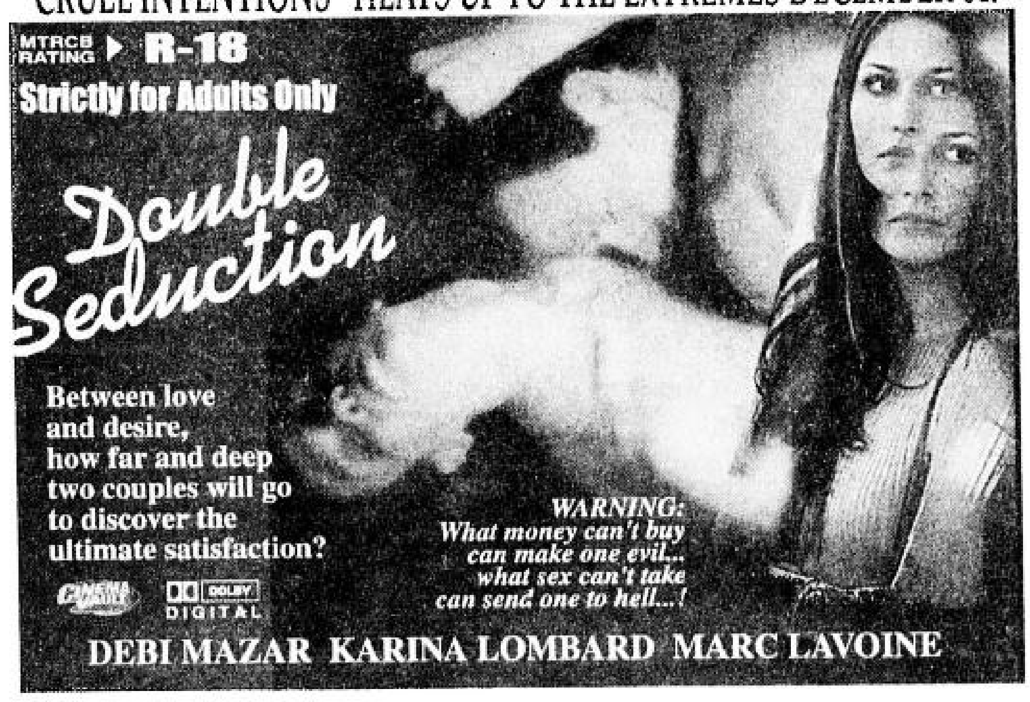

PELIKULANG TAGUMPAY, SA PUBLIKO, SA KRITIKO.
hibla
pelikula ni Yam Laranas
NOW ON ITS 3RD WEEK

THE "VIDEO CURSE" STARTS ITS KILLING SPREE ON DEC. 04!
EXCLUSIVELY AT SM MEGAMALL AND GLORIETTA 4

JAPAN'S No.1 HORROR FILM SERIES IS NOW IN METRO MANILA!

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Experience Fear Worse Than Nightmare!!!
Ring
Circle of Evil
"There's a video. If you see it you have to show it to someone else. After seven days... you die!

"CRUEL INTENTIONS" HEATS UP TO THE EXTREMES DECEMBER 04!


MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18
Strictly for Adults Only
Double Seduction
Between love and desire, how far and deep two couples will go to discover the ultimate satisfaction?
WARNING: What money can't buy can make one evil... what sex can't take can send one to hell...!
DOLBY DIGITAL
DEBI MAZAR KARINA LOMBARD MARC LAVOINE

—THE—
PODIUM

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
Tel : 638 9781 - 85 • 633 8976

1	HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	11:00 MF/2:00/5:05/8:00/ 10:40 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:40 END
2	DIE ANOTHER DAY	11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:10 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 11:40,2:50,6:00,9:10	DIE ANOTHER DAY P13 12:40,3:20, 6:00,8:40	DIE ANOTHER DAY P13 1:30,4:10, 6:50,9:30
HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 12:40,3:50,7:00,10:10	MASTER OF DISGUISE GP 12:40,2:30,4:20, 6:10,8:00,9:50	DIE ANOTHER DAY P13 11:40,2:20,5:00, 7:40,10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON TO FRI

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1
DIE ANOTHER DAY
10:50, 1:35, 4:20,
7:05, 9:50
P13

CINEMA 2
DIE ANOTHER DAY
11:50, 2:35, 5:20,
8:05, 10:50
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
NOV 29-30, 2002 "THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES" 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0636

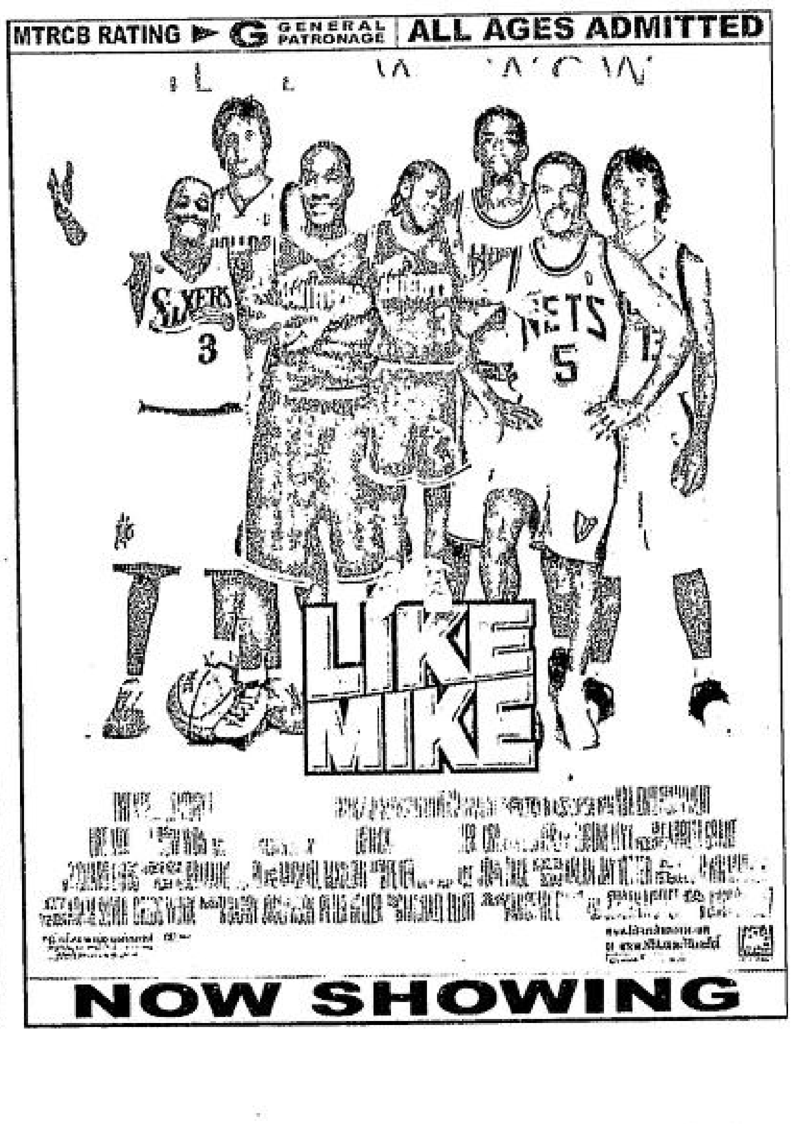
NOW SHOWING

DIANA DIDN'T BARE IT ALL ON EDSA BUT IN "KASIPING," SHE DOES!

MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

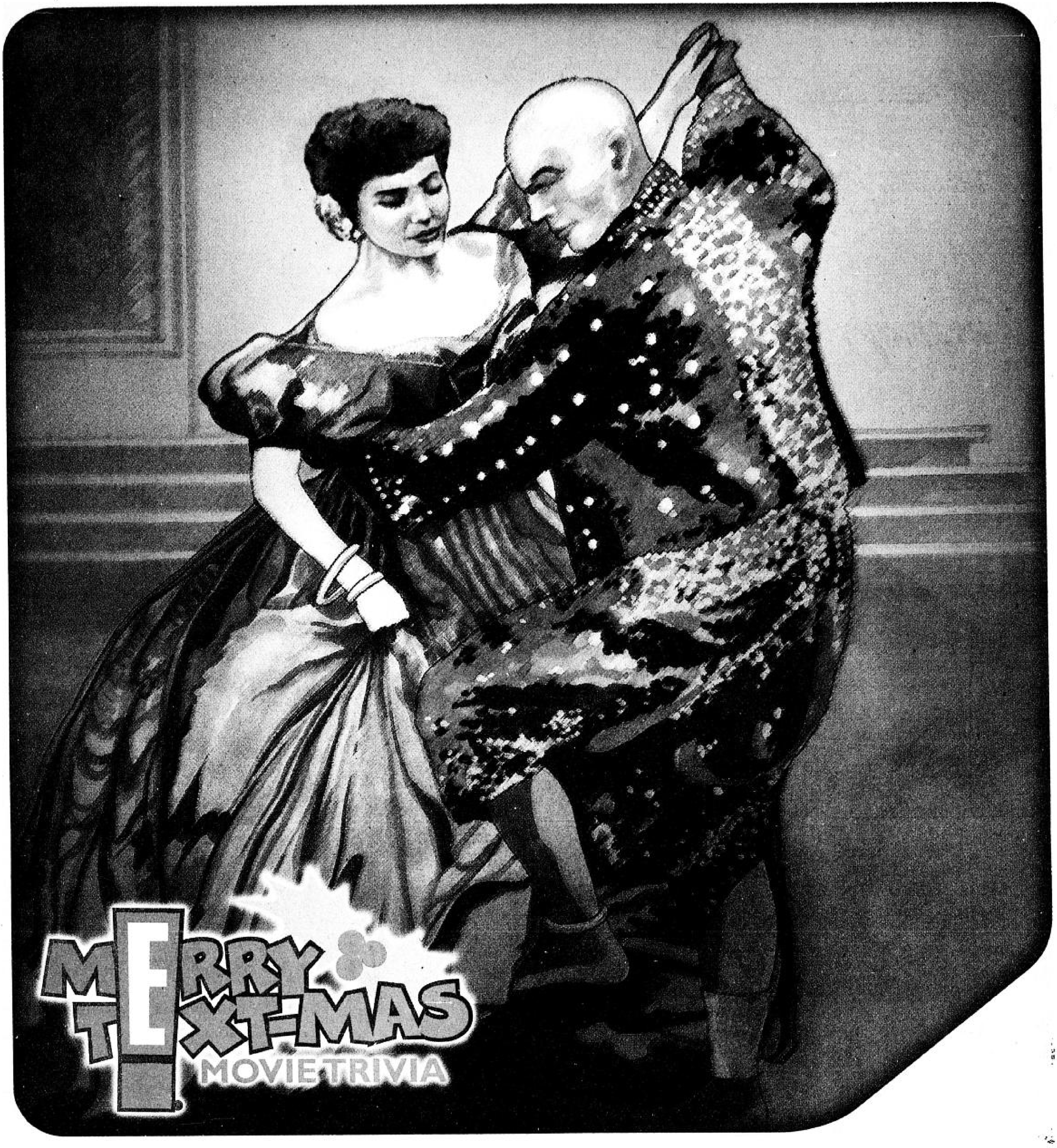
Love thy neighbor, but not thy neighbor's wife!
DIANA ZUBIRI
RODEL VELAYO
GISELLE SANCHEZ
HALINA PEREZ
introducing DANTE BALBOA
LONG MEJIA
KASIPING
a SEIKO Films presentation
Directed by AUGUSTO SALVADOR

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED



NOW SHOWING

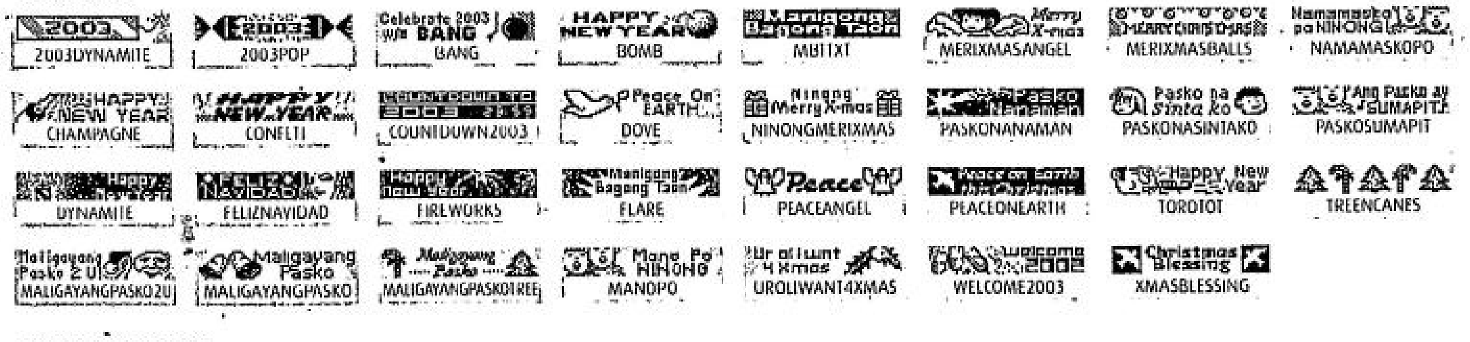
Simply getting to know the classics



This season, have yourself an old-fashioned Christmas only with SMART. Download yuletide logos, picture messages or ringtones of timeless Christmas carols. Catch your favorite classic movies on E! Philippines starting November 27 - December 31 at 8pm and answer trivia questions about them or about the Christmas season on your SMART celfone. To join, just key in TXTMAS and send to 224. With all these in your Christmas stocking, you're sure to have a classic good time.

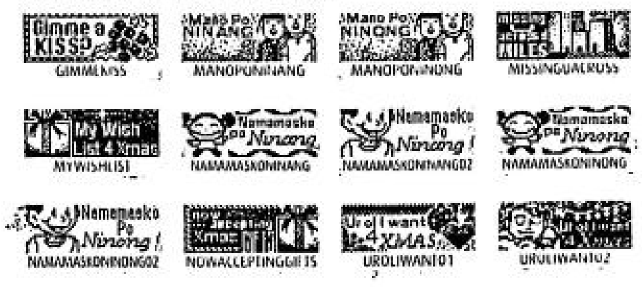
SMART
Simply Amazing!

LOGOS



2003DYNAMITE
2003POP
BANG
BOMB
MBTTXT
MERIXMASANGEL
MERIXMASBALLS
NAMAMASKOPO
CHAMPAGNE
CONFETI
COUNTDOWN2003
DOVE
NINONGMERIXMAS
PASKONANAMAN
PASKONASINTAKO
PASKOSUMAPIT
DYNAMITE
FELIZNAVIDAD
FIREWORKS
FLARE
PEACEANGEL
PEACEONEARTH
TOROTOT
TREENCANES
MALIGAYANGPASKO2U
MALIGAYANGPASKO
MALIGAYANGPASKOTREE
MANOPO
UROLIWANT4XMAS
WELCOME2003
XMASBLESSING

PICTURE MESSAGES



GIMMEKISS
MANOPONINANG
MANOPONINONG
MISSINGUACROSS
MYWISHLIST
NAMAMASKONINANG
NAMAMASKONINANG02
NAMAMASKONINONG
NAMAMASKONINONG02
NOWACCEPTINGGIFTS
UROLIWANT01
UROLIWANT02

RINGTONES

1. Auld Lang Syne	**AUDLANG**	9. Angels We Have Heard On High	**ANGELSONHI**
2. Jingle Bells	**JBELLS**	10. God Rest ye Merry Gentlemen	**GODRESTYE**
3. First Noel	**FIRSTNOEL**	11. Hark the Herald	**HARKDHRALD**
4. We Wish You A Merry Christmas	**WEWISHU**	12. Jolly Old St Nicholas	**JOLYSTNICK**
5. Feliz Navidad	**FELIZ**	13. O Come O ye Faithful	**OFAITHFUL**
6. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas	**HAVEURSELF**	14. O Little Town Of Bethlehem	**BETHLEHEM**
7. Joy to the World	**JOYTO**	15. Silent Night	**SILENTNITE**
8. Tenk u, ang Babarat ninyo	**ANGBABARAT**	16. O Holy Night	**OHOLYNIGHT**

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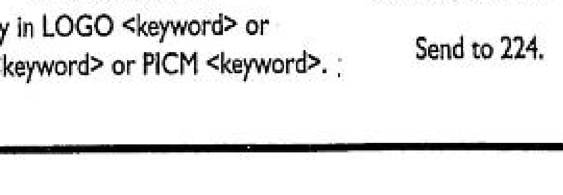

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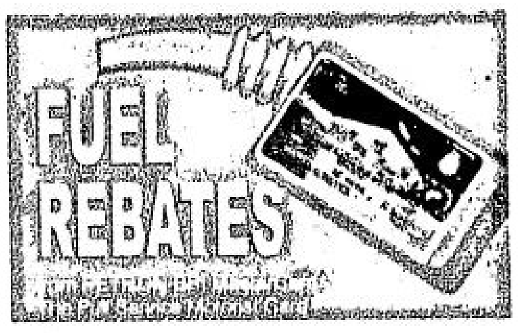

Gov't to issue ₱5-B dollar-linked bonds

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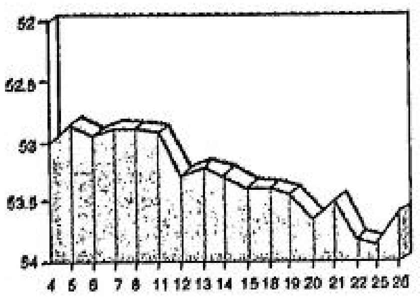
CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 53.60 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 27, 2002

¥ 121.84 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 27, 2002

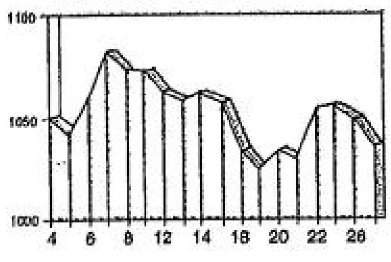
GOLD: $318.25/318.75

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 27, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS finished 1.39 percent down yesterday as players tracked the overnight drop on Wall Street and nagging local political worries dampened sentiment, analysts said.

The main index dropped 1.39 percent, or 14.58 points, to 1,036.27 points. The value of stocks traded dipped to P217.2 million from Tuesday's P246.66 million.

Losers beat gainers 36 to 11, with 33 stocks unchanged.

"We were affected by New York on concerns over a delayed economic recovery there which could have an impact on Asian economies," said A&A Securities research head Astro del Castillo.

On Tuesday the Dow Jones industrial average fell 1.95 percent to 8,676.42.

"Investors were discouraged by current political and economic problems affecting the Macapagal administration," said Del Castillo.

Some of President Macapagal-Arroyo's supporters have turned against her and her popularity rating by local pollsters has slipped following

STOCKS/ B2

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to cancel the remaining treasury bond auction worth P3 billion in December and push through with the sale of up to P5 billion worth of three-year dollar-linked bonds next week.

"In December, we will only hold one auction worth P9 billion for treasury bills and no more treasury bonds. Instead of the regular bonds, we will sell a maximum of P5 billion worth of dollar-linked bonds next week," National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said yesterday.

Edeza said he made sure the dollar-linked bond issue would be offered at rates favorable to the government.

The bonds will be priced at a rate comparable to Philippine dollar bonds of similar maturity plus about half-a-point. The exchange rate has yet to be set.

The central bank had been pushing for the issuance of the dollar-linked bonds as these debt papers would provide investors bearish on the peso with a way to protect their investments.

The peso has been volatile anew, dropping to a 16-month low of 53.85 to a dollar last Friday on renewed uncertainties in the Middle East aggravated by prospects of a rising government deficit and worsening political instability.

"This is the simplest, cheapest way to hedge for anybody who feels a need for a protection from volatile exchange rates," said Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

First offered to local investors in November last year, the so-called dollar-linked instruments are low-earning, peso-denominated bonds. These types of borrowing provide the government with a cheap source of funds because of the low interest rates paid on dollar debt papers.

To allow investors to hedge, the principal investment would be paid based on the peso-dollar exchange rate at the time of maturity.

Last September, the government had planned to issue P7 billion worth of these types of bonds to be underwritten by Deutsche Bank, RCBC Capital and Multinational Investment Bancorporation. But the government was dissuaded when banks sought a higher return for the debt papers.

"We will only float the dollar-linked bonds under the same terms as before. Even the BSP does not want to give banks and investors additional sweeteners as the bonds should be more attractive now that the peso is acting up again," Edeza said.

The dollar-linked instrument was one of the several peso-propping measures that Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had proposed to the central bank in August 2001 when the foreign exchange market was volatile.

Buenaventura said banks have been keeping 53 percent of the dollar-linked bonds sold a year ago in their inventory.

He urged banks to unload these debt papers as more companies and big players may want to hedge their risks against the peso away from speculating in the spot market.

Agrarian reform project gets $50-M World Bank loan

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank board yesterday approved a $50-million loan to help reduce rural poverty and enhance the quality of life in Philippine agrarian reform communities.

In a statement yesterday, country director Robert Vance Pulley said the Philippines' second agrarian reform communities development project (ARCDP-II) would consolidate, sustain and broaden the reach of the gains made in community development and provision of support services under the first phase or ARCDP-I.

"This project builds on existing programs that involve community-driven approaches to rural development, an important element of our country assistance strategy," Pulley said.

"We have seen ARCDP-I's consistent satisfactory performance, which has benefited at least 68,000 households in more than 100 agrarian reform communities in 14 provinces. The bank is pleased to be supporting a project that builds on earlier successes," he said.

Pulley said the benefits from the ARCDP-II would come from direct investment in rural infrastructure such as:

- Irrigation which should directly increase productivity and improve farm incomes;
- Better rural access which should lead to lower marketing costs, higher use of inputs and higher output from agricultural and off-farm enterprises;
- Drying and marketing facilities which should reduce marketing costs and improve product quality and thereby increase incomes, and
- Improved potable water, leading to less sickness, hence more labor availability and higher earnings.

The new loan also aims to fund new tree crops which would lead to long-term incremental production as well as to improve land ti-

AGRARIAN/ B2

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Coutts of the year

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THIS thing is now out of the hands of MJ, the nickname of Rep. Mark Jimenez, the honorable gentleman from Manila.

This celebrated case of the million-dollar man, clearly, is now beyond his control. Taking over is the in-fighting crowd.

Already, a strong faction in Malacañang is said to be drooling. They want the Department of Justice as well.

Getting the department will make the group powerful. It's not everyday you succeed in ousting the likes of Justice Secretary Hernando "On Leave" Perez.

* * *

BUT oddmakers are not putting a lot of points for the honorable gentleman from Bulacan, Rep. Willie Villarama, who started it all.

Villarama ignited the chain reaction, when he talked about the million-dollar man, although he did not refer to anybody in particular, because he did not know who it was.

I still don't know if the congressman will get the votes for "coach of the year," if indeed he coached MJ in this latest offensive.

More than anything else, as MJ delivered his privileged speech the other day, I got the impression that Villarama was not the coach but just a sidekick. *Tonto pa gid.*

* * *

NANI "On-Leave" Perez has a letter from Coutts Bank of Hong Kong, showing he never had any dealing with the bank. Coutts will never be voted "bank of the year," I guess.

For what about Ernest Escaler, whose old photo we showed you yesterday, with his hair still fake? He does not say anything. Nobody knows if he has a similar letter.

Even before this thing got out of hand, Escaler could have grabbed the opportunity to clear his name, which was dragged into the controversy from the start.

Escaler could have gone to the Ombudsman. He could have said he had nothing to do with it. Don't tell that his forbearance was simply amazing.

* * *

MJ used to be MC, which stands for Mario Crespo. For whatever reason, he changed his name. Not many model citizens changed their names. And MJ now claims that Perez slandered him. It was not the money, MJ says, and it was mainly the misery that Perez caused upon his family. Uha-uha! I can cry.

If Perez did that to you in your own house in front of your family, would you wait this long to do something about it?

I know what Sen. Panfilo Lacson would have done. He would have pinched Perez you-know-where right there and then.

* * *

MODEL citizen MJ also claims that he is only facing charges of illegal political contribution in the United States. The message is, he is not really that bad a person.

That, precisely, is what a lot of people are wondering about. How come MJ is not facing any court case here under this cute administration?

Remember, thanks to MJ, during the time of the man named Band ... Wrist Band ... the word "crony" was born again.

How come he has a lot of money? How come he keeps his money in tax havens abroad? Does he even bother to pay taxes here for that stash?

* * *

EVEN the oldtimers in Meralco think it's deja vu to Meralco. All this misery that befalls on the company seems to have happened before.

Under martial rule, just when Meralco got a rate increase from the government, the government changed rules and took back the rate increase.

Eventually Meralco bumped into a lot of financial trouble. It defaulted on its loans. This prompted the government to take over the company quickly.

If it sounds familiar, it's because it is the same solution of this cute administration to solve Meralco's problem. It's just that the problem was not even Meralco's own doing.

* * *

IN fairness to Meralco, and its thousands of workers, plus their families, the company has not gotten any rate increase.

The rates of power generation companies like Napocor increased by about 9 percent a year, but the rates of electric distribution companies like Meralco remained as constant as the pi.

To top it all, the ERB granted other distribution companies the same thing it denied to Meralco. It allowed them to charge income tax as operating cost.

For as an accounting standard, taxes are always considered as a part of doing business, unless of course Meralco is a tax evader.

Why such a worldwide accounting practice was lost to the Supreme Court, I have yet to make a wild guess.

* * *

DON'T look now, but one of the recipients of the TOYM awards, which will be handed out this Friday, is a scion of a famous family.

At one time, the outstanding young person was directly accused by the police force as one of the biggest "gambling lords" in Luzon, being a known jueteng operator in his area.

The TOYM board of judges never even considered the other candidates in the same category as the lucky son of his father.

Their reason was, well, all the other candidates belonged to rich families. Who said that awards like the TOYM are blind to social status?

It seems even the TOYM is caught in our long-drawn class struggle. So it's only right that they are bound to give the award to a jueteng operator.

Ayala to honor land donation deal with PSE

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALA-CAMPOS group has vowed to honor existing property contracts entered into by Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. upon their takeover of the Fort Bonifacio Global City project, including a donation agreement with the Philippine Stock Exchange.

In a press briefing, ALI president Francisco Licuanan III said the purchase by the Ayala-Campos group of a 50.4-percent stake in Bonifacio Land Co. would not affect the renegotiated donation deal recently signed by FBDC and the PSE.

BLC owns majority of Fort Bonifacio Global City developer FBDC, a joint venture with the state-owned Bases Conversion Development Authority.

The Ayala group, which lost to Metro Pacific Corp. in 1995 when development rights to Fort Bonifacio was first bid out, earlier vehemently opposed the transfer of the PSE to a unified trading floor in Fort Bonifacio. Likewise a donor of one of the PSE's two existing trading floors, Ayala then presented a counter-offer that would expand the PSE's existing space in Makati but the local bourse chose the MPC offer instead.

With the Ayala group now getting a second crack at the Fort Bonifacio development, questions have been raised on whether it would still be keen on the PSE donation agreement.

Under the deal with PSE, FBDC will create a subsidiary that will own a 2,183-sq.m. property in the Fort Bonifacio Global City and shares in the spin-off unit will be transferred to the PSE in various tranches over a seven-year period. FBDC will construct the building to be donated to PSE, but it has the option to exit from such obligation while the PSE has the option to accelerate the construction.

The PSE was given assurance, however, that the donation deal would be fleshed out despite the impending change of leadership in BLC.

But Licuanan said other joint venture plans which have not been finalized by FBDC—such as those with mall developers Robinsons Land Corp. and the SM group—would have to be reviewed.

He assured, however, that even if RLC's and SM's products could potentially compete with ALI's adjacent retail development, Market!Market!, the Ayala-Campos joint venture would not hold back development.

GLOBAL CORPORATE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. (right) exchanges pleasantries with US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone Jr. and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. (QPL) general manager Bart Lucarelli during simple presentation ceremonies recently for QPL's being cited as finalist for the 2002 US Secretary of State's Award for Global Corporate Excellence. QPL and five others were chosen as finalists from a field of 56 nominee-US companies operating overseas, while two were picked for the award itself. QPL was the only US company in Asia to make the final list. QPL is Southeast Asia's and the country's first base-loaded independent power producer (IPP) to sell to a nongovernment utility.

Agrarian reform project gets $50-M World Bank loan

From page B1

tling, rural finance and training in agricultural enterprise development, all of which should lead to the development of new enterprises, and higher productivity of existing enterprises.

About 80 agrarian reform communities with about 70,000 farm households are projected to benefit in the form of higher productivity and incomes from the ARCDP-II.

World Bank project manager Frank Byamugisha said: "In addition, many more people would benefit from the indirect impact of the project in terms of employment income, reduced transport costs and increased trading opportunities as a result of using roads built under the project."

Stocks end lower

From page B1

budget deficit problems.

Dealers said investors were taking short-term positions and quick gains ahead of the release of third-quarter GDP data today.

"Selling was broad-based, with a lot of blue chips sold down, although the declines were generally slight," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities Inc.

"The market declined after it failed to hold support at 1,050, and is now seeking a stronger support level," he said.

Del Castillo said he expected the market to trade sideways with a negative bias for the rest of the week. *Reuters, AFP*

PT&T, creditors sign debt-relief agreement

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Telegraph and Telephone Corp. has signed a master restructuring agreement with 12 creditors representing almost 80 percent of its total debts and is now gearing for corporate reorganization.

Under the agreement, PT&T's total debt of P8.8 billion would have a longer repayment schedule and half of this debt load will be converted to equity.

Ricardo Ysmael, executive vice president of PT&T's parent firm Republic Telecommunications Holdings Inc., said in an interview during the signing of the agreement late Tuesday that this would effectively pave the way for a board reorganization as creditors now had control of four board seats in the company.

He added that the company's remaining 22 creditors were expected to also sign restructuring agreements with PT&T within the first quarter of next year.

Creditors would gain control of 68 percent to 70 percent of the company when all 34 of them agree to the company's debt restructuring proposal.

"We're now in a situation where we were able to convince creditors to partner with us instead of foreclosing (our business). Times are hard for the industry but the debt issue out of the way, management can now concentrate on building the company," Ysmael told reporters.

The part of the debt not converted to equity will have a repayment period of 10 years, including a five-year grace period on principal.

For the dollar-denominated loans, interest rate is pegged at three-month London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor) plus a 2-percent spread. For the peso-denominated loans, interest rate is placed at the 91-day treasury bill rate plus a 2-percent spread.

Lenders who signed the agreement include All Asia Capital and Trust Co., Asia Trust Bank, Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M., Development Bank of the Philippines, East Asia Capital Corp., J.P. Morgan Chase, Keppel Bank Philippines Inc., Korea Telecom Philippines Inc., Penta Capital Corp., Philippine National Bank, Tomen Corp., and United Coconut Planters Bank.

PT&T president and chief executive Jose Luis Santiago said in a separate interview that the signing of the agreement would allow the company to focus on the data side of its business as well as entertain interested investors.

"With this restructuring, the way is now clear to look for new funds. Some have already expressed interest, particularly funders that usually work with companies that are undergoing a turnaround," he said.

Discussions on the restructuring of PT&T's debts started at the height of the Asian financial crisis in 1997. This dragged talks to almost five years before a final agreement was reached just this Tuesday, restructuring committee head and J.P. Morgan Chase Bank vice president Renato Castillo explained.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, November 27, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	12,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	39.5	39.5	39	39	372,400
China Banking Corp.	615	615	615	615	9,570
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	1,600
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	26	26	333,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	32	30.5	31	383,500
Philippine National Bank	26.5	26.5	25	25	10,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
Security Bank Corp.	11.25	11.25	11	11	56,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	2,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1310	1310	100
Sun Life Financial Serv.	925	950	925	950	1,670
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.39	0.41	3,800,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	415	415	415	415	5,250
Ipeople Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	200,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	267.5	275	267.5	272.5	73,880
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	17,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	10	10	9.9	9.9	32,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.5	11.5	10.75	10.75	1,638,500
Petron Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.54	1.58	2,300,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	4,783,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	15,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	59,600,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	90,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.45	3.45	3.1	3.1	6,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	7,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14.75	15	14.75	15	800
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34.5	34.5	34	34.5	314,700
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	174,100
San Miguel Corp. B	64	64	63.5	63.5	244,800
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.7	358,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.32	2.32	2.3	2.32	8,844,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	8,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	21,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.135	0.14	8,070,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	250,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	10.75	10.75	10	10	323,100
Ionics Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.94	0.95	258,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	51,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.58	0.58	970,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	150,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	2,530,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	350,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3	37,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.04	9,300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	10,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	13,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	284,400
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	160,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	170,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	15.25	15.25	15	15	240,400
Jollibee Warrants	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	12,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	3.6	4.45	3.6	4.45	21,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.95	5	4.9	4.95	1,625,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	250,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	3,700,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	1,630,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,810,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	1,000,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	3,215,000
MINING					
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	9,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	7,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	230,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	500,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	51,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	10,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	700,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,184,940	43,821,425.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	124,977,730	145,909,745.00
PRO	13,250,000	26,966,300.00
Mining	16,930,000	237,600.00
OIL	62,700,000	164,600.00
GRAND TOTALS :	219,042,670	217,099,670.00
	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	393.50	DOWN 1.38
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,460.06	DOWN 20.17
PRO	449.57	DOWN 11.61
Mining	1,073.31	DOWN 5.23
OIL	1.24	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	642.63	DOWN 7.13
Composite	1,036.27	DOWN 14.58

NO. OF ADVANCES: 11; NO. OF DECLINES: 36; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 33; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 80; NO. OF TRADES: 1,212

DISCLOSURES

METRO Alliance Holdings and Equities Corp.'s new stock and transfer agent is the **Equitable and PCI Bank**.

* * *

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank Corp. has announced the resignation of Rodney Ming-Hsiang Lu as director of the bank and elected Edwin Villanueva as his replacement.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Salcon Power Corp.** were Dennis Villareal, Lim Chan Lok, Alfredo Henares, Alberto Fenix Jr., Wong Fong Fui, Yeo Ker Kuang, Chang Ching Chau, Tong Weng Leong, Sung Chiang, Roberto de Ocampo and Augusto Go.

* * *

BALABAC Resources & Holdings Co. Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Jan. 14, 4 p.m. at the Turf Room of Manila Polo Club. Stockholders of record as of Dec. 6 shall be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

FIRST Abacus Financial Holdings Corp. has decreased the number of its directors from nine to seven.

* * *

ROXAS Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 27, 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Hotel, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Oct. 15 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

MANILA Jockey Club Inc. denied having any information that could have affected the value of its shares. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Nov. 27, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.006543	1	53.64
Japan	Yen	0.008278	0.008224	0.4411
United Kingdom	Pound	1.562758	1.5526	83.2815
Hongkong	Dollar	0.129072	0.128233	6.8784
Switzerland	Franc	0.678629	0.674218	36.1651
Canada	Dollar	0.639034	0.63488	34.055
Singapore	Dollar	0.571024	0.567312	30.4306
Australia	Dollar	0.563858	0.560193	30.0488
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.669945	2.65259	142.2849
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.268412	0.266667	14.304
Brunei	Dollar	0.569408	0.565707	30.3445
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000111	0.006
Thailand	Baht	0.023214	0.023063	1.2371
UAE	Dirham	0.274045	0.272264	14.6042
Euro	Euro	1	0.9935	53.2913
Argentina	Peso	0.290069	0.288184	15.4582
Brazil	REAL	0.279595	0.277778	14.9
Denmark	Kroner	0.134585	0.13371	7.1722
India	Rupee	0.020909	0.020773	1.1143
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.264915	0.263193	14.1177
Mexico	New Peso	0.098952	0.098309	5.2733
New Zealand	Dollar	0.501067	0.49781	26.7025
Norway	Kroner	0.137447	0.136554	7.3248
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017279	0.017167	0.9208
South Africa	Rand	0.109215	0.108505	5.8202
Korea	Won	0.000841	0.000836	0.0448
Sweden	Kroner	0.110184	0.109468	5.8719
Syria	Pound	0.019544	0.019417	1.0415
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.029074	0.028885	1.5494
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000759	0.000754	0.0404

US still the biggest bond market

By Clarissa S. Batino

WITH $970 million in available registration in the global bond market, the government said yesterday the US market remained the most attractive place to raise funds, although it was not shutting its doors to the European and Japanese markets to help pool its huge budget requirement next year.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government was closely looking at developments in the yen and euro markets, where it planned to borrow funds should there be a good opportunity.

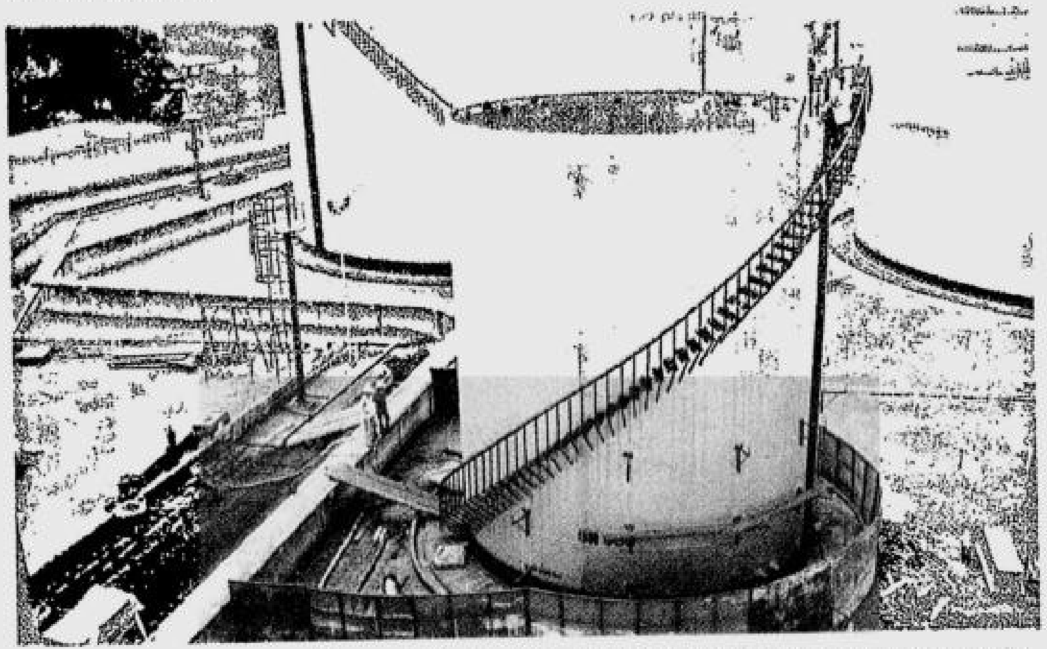
The government has to raise at least $2.3 billion to finance a deficit of P202 billion next year.

Edeza said the government would continue to source the bulk of its financing requirements from the domestic market after the deficit target was increased from P142.1 billion.

He said the government could sell as much as $500 million worth of bonds in the long-term Japanese bond market early next year even without a guarantee from Japan's Nippon Export and Investment Insurance, the state-owned group that guaranteed the Philippine government bond issue in December 2001.

"We continue to look at the yen and the euro as an option although the global market remains the most attractive," Edeza said.

The government sold $500 million worth of 10-year bonds in the global market two weeks ago.



PETRON Corp. has started decommissioning three fuel storage tanks to pave the way for the planned safety and green buffer zone as part of its efforts to scale down its Pandacan terminal. Petron's three storage tanks, with a total capacity of 46,000 barrels, will be fully taken down by year's end. Shown here is one of the three tanks being dismantled at the terminal.

DBP reports ₱1.5-B income

STATE-OWNED Development Bank of the Philippines yesterday reported a net profit of P1.5 billion in the first 10 months of the year, 16 percent higher than a year earlier's P1.3 billion.

In a news briefing on Tuesday, DBP president Simon Paterno said the bank, however, would likely post a lower profit this year compared to last year because it intended to allocate more provisions for probable losses.

Next year could also be a difficult year for the bank to achieve a profit growth, he added.

"I think next year will be very unpredictable because the first quarter could see the possibility of armed conflict and bring uncertainty to financial markets and the recovery of large Philippine markets such as the United States," Paterno said.

Elena R. Torrijos

SEC seen approving NSC rehab program

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission will approve the plan to revive National Steel Corp. under the agreement signed by creditors and shareholders of the shuttered steel firm the other day, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said yesterday.

The agreement made moot and academic various pending motions on its table regarding the liquidation of NSC, Bautista said.

"We will leave it up to the (owners of the) new company to decide whether to lease, sell or run the company themselves," she said.

She said she expected NSC liquidator Danilo Concepcion to file a motion for approval of the plan as signed by the parties involved.

The approval will pave the way for the reopening of NSC, which closed down in 1999 after it could not anymore pay its debts.

Under the memorandum of agreement signed by NSC creditors and shareholders, the creditor banks will convert P16 billion of their P18-billion exposure to equity equivalent to 80 percent of a new company that will own the assets of the steel firm.

The creditors will have left P2 billion in loans, while 20 percent of the new company will be held by current NSC majority owner Hottick Investments Ltd., the Malaysian group that invested $700 million to $800 million in the steel firm several years ago.

The Malaysian government is now the largest creditor of Hottick.

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Chief executives' dinner raises over ₱2.2M for Children's Hour

By Celine R. Madamba

DURING a benefit dinner at Le Souffle, more than 100 business leaders led by President Macapagal-Arroyo and her family raised over P2.2 million for the benefit of children and youth causes supported by the Children's Hour campaign.

Children's Hour is a global fund-raising campaign that calls on individuals and companies to donate an hour's worth of earnings for programs dedicated to children and the youth. It was launched in the Philippines in 1999 and re-launched as a yearly campaign in August by a steering committee of distinguished business and government leaders led by Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II.

Since its launch, the campaign has raised more than P40 million for the benefit of 44 carefully selected foundations that provide children and youth with preventive and rehabilitative services, temporary shelter, feeding programs, and education. With the help of its cooperating partner, the Elena P. Tan Foundation, medical equipment was also donated to the pediatric wards of 10 hospitals and three health centers nationwide. So far, more than 88,000 children and youth beneficiaries nationwide have benefited from the campaign.

The importance of providing the youth with opportunities to achieve their full potential is a key concern of the Children's Hour. According to former President Corazon Aquino, the campaign's honorary chair, "programs such as the Children's Hour can be instrumental in helping our youth take their deserved places in society and in the leadership of our country."

Mobilizing companies to address this concern is a key objective. According to Zobel, "we wish to build on the wellspring of generosity to relaunch the Children's Hour to give them (companies and organizations) once again an opportunity to champion the cause of children among their employees and company executives. We can then advocate among other companies to come and join us in this campaign to save our children from illiteracy, homelessness, hunger and abuse."

So far, the results have been promising. More than P14 million in cash and pledges have been raised since August with the support of various companies and organizations. These include the Management Association of the Philippines, Philippine Marketing Association, Makati Business Club, Personnel Management Association of the Philippines, Philippine Band of Mercy, Employers Confederation of the Philippines, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Globe Telecommunications, and Bank of the Philippine Islands.

A total of 216 corporations have pledged their support, while others have devised creative ways to support the campaign. The Philippine Band of Mercy, for instance, has pledged P5 million worth of medical services to beneficiary organizations. Philippine Military Academy cadets and cadettes have pledged to donate an hour of their allowance every month until February 2003. Alexander Wear International Corp. will donate P1 for every Napoleon's children's shirt sold and Healthway Medical Clinics will give 5 percent to the program for every new membership.

Through its "Text 4 D Children" campaign, Globe Telecom has invited its subscribers to donate through text. Meanwhile, ANC 21 will be conducting a telethon for Children's Hour on Sunday, Dec. 8 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. Members of the Children's Hour steering committee will man the phones and special features will be aired with celebrity endorsers Jolina Magdangal and Jose Mari Chan.

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$500-M Napocor bond issue moved to next year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE POWER Sector Assets and Liabilities and Management Corp. said yesterday a $500-million bond issuance for the National Power Corp.'s financing needs had been put off for next year due to adverse market conditions.

At the same time, Psalm, which is assuming Napocor's financial obligations, said a $250-million, yen-denominated issue would be doubled.

"We have raised the 18-year yen bond that we expect to issue next month to an equivalent of $500 million because we had to set aside the dollar issue," Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso said in an interview.

Del Fonso said Psalm hoped the board of directors of the Asian Development Bank, which has committed a partial guarantee for the borrowings, would approve the samurai issue when it meets on Dec. 3.

He added that the ADB wanted a restructuring of the dollar bond, as the current structure would not work out.

"The market is not hospitable to the (dollar issue) because of what is happening in Argentina," Del Fonso said.

He explained that Psalm's planned dollar bond was modeled after what the World Bank issued for Argentina and which the Latin American country defaulted on.

In 1999, the World Bank approved a $250-million issue under a partial guarantee designed to support emerging economies with temporarily constrained access to international financial markets.

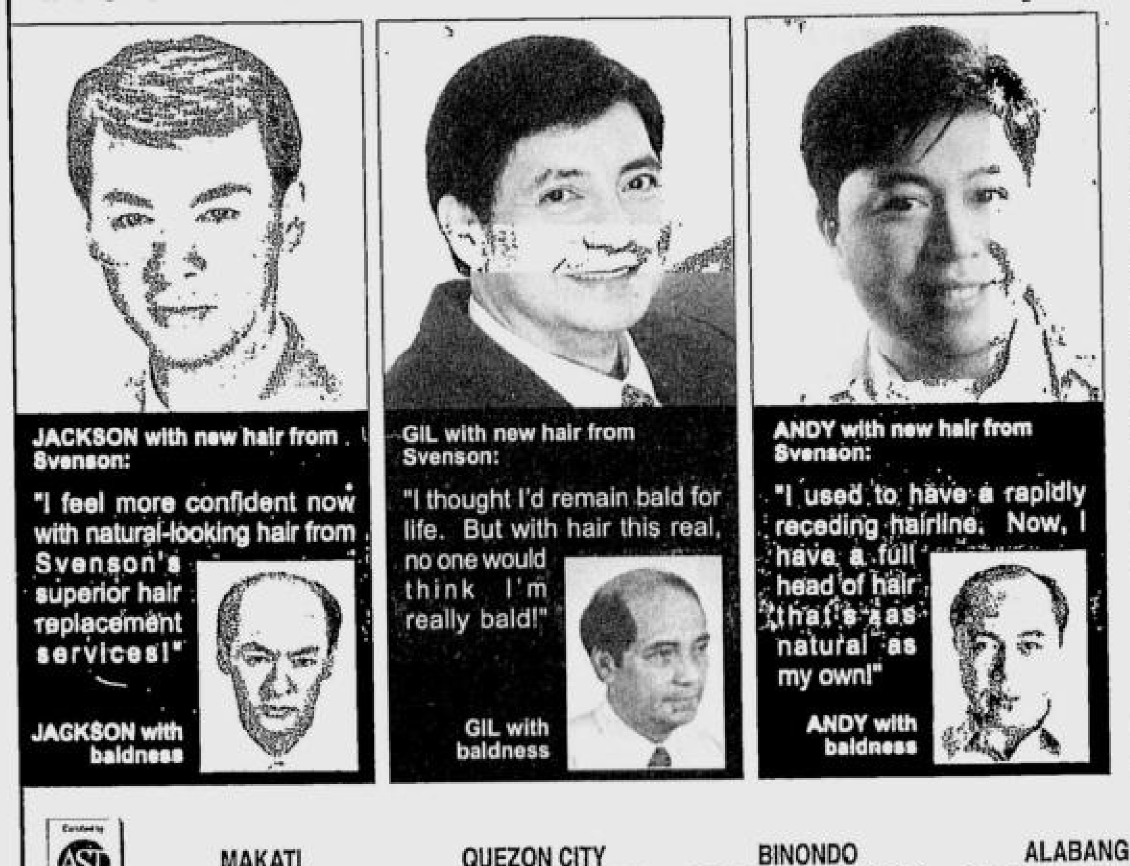
Del Fonso said Psalm expected to have the yen-denominated bond issued next month, adding that arranger Nomura Securities guaranteed the last 10 installments and the principal amount.

Also, the Psalm chief said a $250-million bridge financing was expected to be secured in December.

Arranged by Citibank NA, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp., Credit Lyonnais and Standard Chartered, the bridge loan will complete the $750 million that Napocor needs for its operating expenses this year.

The power firm needs a total of $1.5 billion for 2002, half of which had been raised through piggyback issues on sovereign borrowings early this year.

Del Fonso said the bridge loan would have to be paid in five or six months.



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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

No blanket protection for auto players, DTI says

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TRADE officials are dangling tariff shield incentives to encourage the country's auto parts makers to augment their investments, tie up with carmakers abroad and widen their product lines.

In a meeting with local auto parts makers on Tuesday, the Department of Trade and Industry said it would not give "blanket protection" to all auto industry players under the ongoing review of "most favored nation" tariffs for non-Asean countries.

Although it has agreed to raise duties on both vehicles and auto parts by 2004, the trade department is not providing all players tariff protection unless they firm up their businesses by pouring more money to expand and improve operations.

To get tariff protection, the DTI said, auto parts makers should also tie up with carmakers and their affiliates to get access to new technology and markets.

It said that without a technical partner, auto parts makers would be hard-pressed to keep up with the latest designs and materials, as well as sell to foreign carmakers.

Trade officials are urging industry players to focus on small parts, such as radiators, where the Philippines has a bigger chance to excel as a world-class supplier.

The trade department believes there is no point in aiming to build major components, such as transmissions, axles and engines, in the Philippines since automakers have already designated what countries in Southeast Asia will produce these parts under the pan-regional production sharing agreement Aico or Asean Industrial Cooperation Agreement.

In the Philippines' case, the country has been chosen by most Japanese assemblers as its transmission production hub.

The tariff protection for local parts makers is part of the DTI's strategy to develop a locally viable, export competitive automotive industry within five to six years.

The Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing Association of the Philippines is aiming to nearly double its exports to $2 billion within the next three years through the improvement of technology and closer links with foreign carmakers.

SEC backs 'free look' at pre-need plans

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is urging the preneed industry to adopt a "free look," or a trial period with money back guarantee, for pre-need plans.

Berkley International Plans Inc., one of the country's largest pre-need companies for education plans, proposed the free look concept and had asked the SEC to make this a requirement for the industry.

"I think it's a good idea, and the industry should consider it," SEC Chair Lilia Bautista told reporters yesterday.

The free look concept allows new planholders the opportunity to look deeper into a company's financial position and the terms of the pre-need plan contract. If within the trial period, and even after payment has been made, planholders may still ask for their money back if they change their mind.

Berkley has said that implementing the free look is a positive measure that will strengthen the industry and weed out, in the long run, undeserving players who are incapable of fulfilling their financial promises to the public.

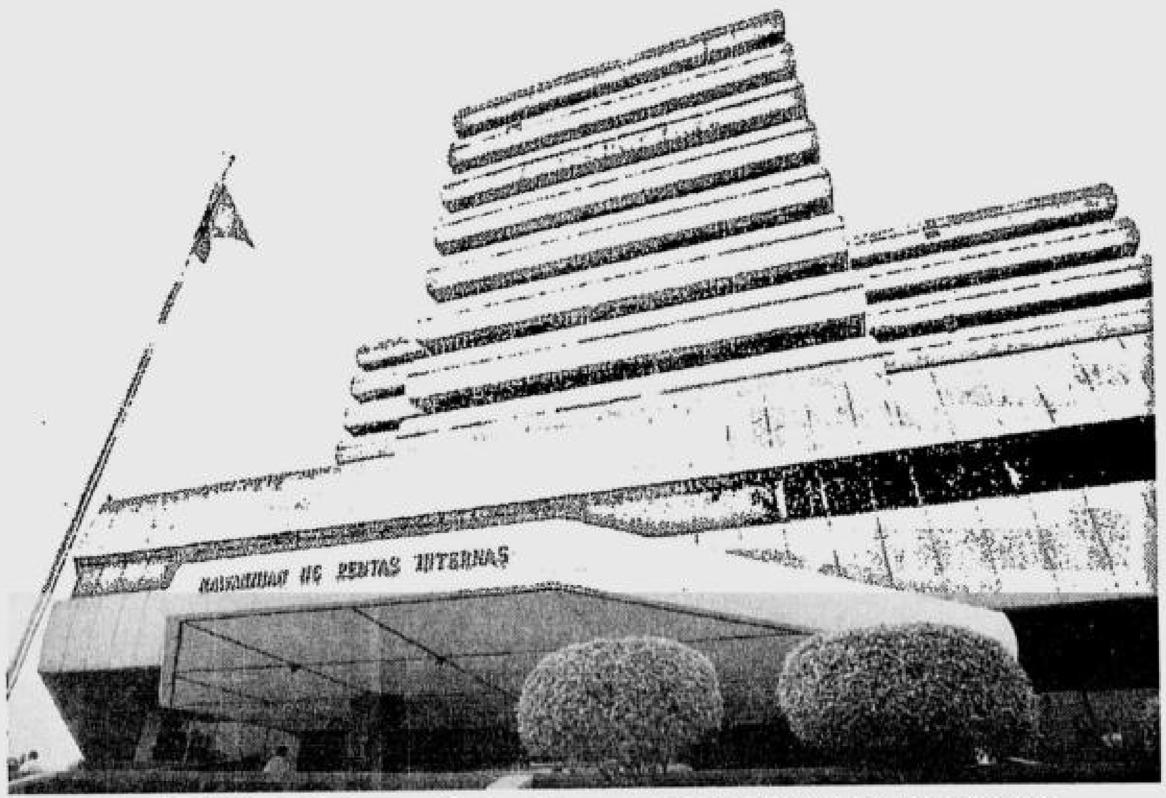
According to Berkley officials, the Philippine Federation of Preneed Plan Companies Inc. has indicated it cannot support the idea given that some pre-need companies will likely be unable to afford implementation.

PFPPCI president Miguel Vasquez, however, said the federation had no position because the free look concept had not been brought to its attention.

In a news briefing on Tuesday, Berkley said it was targeting next year a 30-percent growth in total revenue by establishing as many as three additional branches nationwide.

Fernando Correa Urquiza, president of Berkley International LLC, said the Philippine unit's ambitious growth target next year, however, could be made easier or more difficult depending on the domestic economy and the recovery of the industry.

Urquiza also introduced to reporters Berkley's new Philippine president, Luie Dy Buncio.



THE HEADQUARTERS of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Because of lower-than-expected tax collections, the budget deficit target for this year has been revised to 5.6 percent of gross domestic product, or P223 billion, well above the original full-year target of P130 billion. AFP

Petral plans 1st gas deal with Petron

SINGAPORE—Singapore-based Petral plans to buy gas oil and kerosene from Petron Corp. under a one-year term contract, the first supply deal between the firms, industry sources said on Tuesday.

They said Petral, an affiliate of Indonesia's state-oil firm Pertamina, wants to secure 240,000-360,000 tons of 0.5-percent sulphur gas oil and kerosene starting January 2003.

The deal would be on a cost-and-freight basis with delivery to North Sulawesi and North Kalimantan in Indonesia, a journey as short as two days.

"These places are near to the Philippines. It makes sense to buy cargoes from Petron as delivery will be easy operationally and faster as well," a source said.

"Diversification of supplies is important to Indonesia, as it ensures security of supplies," the source said.

Acting on behalf of Pertamina, Petral sealed a maiden term supply deal in early November with Middle East producer Saudi Aramco to buy 800,000 tons of gas oil in 2003. *Reuters*

Asia to finish currency safety net in May

SINGAPORE—Asian governments plan to complete by May all the main bilateral currency-swap deals underpinning a regional initiative to help avert future financial crises, according to regional officials.

The aim is to finish the work in time for the annual meeting of the Asian Development Bank in Istanbul, which will mark the third anniversary of the launch of the currency safety net in the northern Thai resort of Chiang Mai.

Under the Chiang Mai Initiative, central banks of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus Japan, China and South Korea are weaving a web of swaps that would make foreign exchange reserves available at short notice to a country facing a sudden deterioration in its balance of payments.

The goal is to give central banks firepower to buy time during the sort of speculative attack that led to the devaluation of the Thai baht in July 1997, triggering a region-wide crisis.

Although the sums involved are small in relation to the size of the foreign exchange market, officials see the Chiang Mai initiative as an important step toward regional economic cooperation that might even lead, one day in the distant future, to a single Asian currency.

"By the time of the ADB annual meeting, the entire network should be in place," Pradumna Rana of the ADB's Regional Economic Monitoring Unit said in Manila.

Rana, whose unit provides input to an economic peer-review process that is also part of the Chiang Mai initiative, said ministers and their deputies would meet on the sidelines of the Istanbul conference to review the size of the swap deals and the rules governing them.

Currently, countries can draw down only 10 percent of the swap line without agreeing to a program of reforms overseen by the International Monetary Fund.

Asean central bankers took the view at a meeting in Indonesia in July that this requirement was too harsh. Some countries, though, fear they would be throwing good money after bad without tough IMF guidelines.

Initially, the swaps network excludes Brunei and Asean's four newest members: Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma.

The most recent bilateral deal, for $1.5 billion, was signed last month between China and Malaysia.

Officials will have their work cut out meeting the May deadline. A $3-billion pact between Japan and Indonesia, which was due to have been signed in August, is still not ready, although officials in Tokyo said steady progress was being made.

Similarly, $1 billion worth of deals with South Korea and China that Philippine Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said on Sept. 11 would be signed very soon were still on the drawing board. *Reuters*

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
SPECIAL DRUG AND COMMERCIAL COURT
Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

IN THE MATTER OF PETITIONER
FOR THE DECLARATION OF STATE
OF SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS
WITH APPROVAL OF PROPOSED
REHABILITATION PLAN,

SPEC. PRO. NO. 2002-095

NISSAN SPECIALIST SALES CORP.
Petitioners.
x--x

ORDER

When called this afternoon for initial hearing, petitioner, through counsel, manifested that it has complied with the jurisdictional requirement by publishing the Stay Order issued by this court on September 16, 2002 in two newspapers of General Circulation and in support thereof submitted an affidavit of publication of the resident publisher of Mindanao Gold Star Daily marked as Exh. "A" and the copy of the publication on its issue on October 5, 2002 where the stay order was published on page 11 thereof marked Exh. "B" as well as a copy of its issued on September 28, 2002 on page 4 thereof where the stay order was published marked Exh. "C".

On the other hand, creditor Bank of the Philippine Island, through counsel, vehemently opposed that petitioner has complied with the jurisdictional requirement by publishing the Stay Order in the newspaper of the general circulation in the Philippines for it only published the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in Mindanao particularly Gold Star Daily which indeed an affidavit of publication of the publisher resident admitted that the Gold Star is newspaper of general circulation in Mindanao thereby failing to comply with the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation particularly Rule 3, Section 1 thereof in relation to Rule 4, Section 6 which states under paragraph "(h) directing the petitioner to publish the Stay Order in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks;"

Petitioner admitted the rules on publication but requested that in the event that the court would decide on its non-compliance of jurisdictional requirement, it moved to be allowed to republish the same to comply with the jurisdictional requirement considering the liberal construction of the rules particularly Rule 2, Section 2 thereof.

Upon thorough evaluation of the issue involved, the court finds that the petitioner indeed failed to comply with the jurisdictional requirement of publication of the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Consequently, the manifestation of the petitioner that it has complied with the jurisdictional requirement as evidenced by Exhs. "A", "B" and "C" is hereby denied.

However, in order to liberally construe the provision in the Interim Rules, the petitioner is hereby allowed to republish the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

To give ample time to the petitioner to republish the Stay Order, let the initial trial of this case be reset to December 12, 2002 at 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

The manifestation of creditors, Universal Motors Corporation, Bank of the Philippine Island, Security Bank and RCBC with respect to their Motion for Leave of Court to file opposition to the Petition will be resolved during the initial hearing of the republished Stay Order.

Parties are notified in open court.

SO ORDERED.

Dictated in open court, this 13th day of November, 2002 at Cagayan de Oro City.

(Sgd.) EPIFANIO T. NACAYA, CESO V
Presiding Judge

ETN/rpp

(Sgd.) ATTY. MA. THERESA ABAN-CAMANNONG
Clerk of Court V
RTC, Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

—o0o—

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
SPECIAL DRUGS AND COMMERCIAL COURT
10th Judicial Region
BRANCH 40
Cagayan de Oro City

IN THE MATTER OF PETITION FOR
THE DECLARATION OF STATE OF
SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS WITH
APPROVAL OF PROPOSED REHABILITATION PLAN,

SPEC. PRO. 2002-095

NISSAN SPECIALIST SALES CORP.
Petitioner
x--x

STAY ORDER

Before this court is a Petition for Rehabilitation and for the Declaration of State of Suspension of Payments with Approval of Proposed Rehabilitation Plan filed by petitioner Nissan Specialist Sales Corporation, with principal place of business at Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the court hereby issues this Stay Order pursuant to Section 6, Rule 4, Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation reprinting compliance with the following terms and conditions, to wit:

a) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by the court action or otherwise, against the debtor, its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with the debtor;

b) Prohibiting the debtor from selling, encumbering, transferring, or disposing in any manner any of its properties except in the ordinary course of business;

c) Prohibiting the debtor from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as of the date of filing of the petition,

d) Prohibiting the debtor's suppliers of goods or services from with holding supply of goods and services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the debtor makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this stay order,

e) Directing the payment in full of all administrative expenses incurred after the issuance of this stay order,

f) Directing all creditors and all interested parties (including the Securities and Exchange Commission) to file and serve on the debtor a verified comment on or opposition to the petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing and putting them on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings, and;

g) Directing the creditors and interested parties to secure from the court copies of the petition and its annexes within such time as to enable themselves to file their comment on or opposition to the petition and to prepare for the initial hearing of the petition.

h) The encashments or deposits of the following checks are hereby ordered stayed.

To Far East Bank

	NAME OF BANK	CHECK NO.	DATE	AMOUNT
1.	BPI	66432	6-10-01	P 185,000.00
2.	BPI	66433	7-10-01	185,000.00
3.	BPI	66434	8-10-01	185,000.00
4.	BPI	66435	9-10-01	185,000.00
5.	BPI	66436	10-10-01	185,000.00
6	BPI	66437	11-10-01	185,000.00
7	BPI	66438	12-10-01	185,000.00
8	BPI	66439	1-10-02	185,000.00
9.	BPI	66440	2-10-02	185,000.00
10	BPI	66441	3-10-02	185,000.00
11.	BPI	66442	4-10-02	185,000.00
12.	BPI	66443	5-10-02	185,000.00

To Security Bank

1	BPI	74885	9-20-02	100,000.00
2.	BPI	74886	10-20-02	100,000.00
3.	BPI	74888	11-20-02	100,000.00
4	BPI	74889	12-20-02	100,000.00

i) MR. MANUEL Q. ANO-OS of Philbanking Village, New Society, Apopong, General Santos City is hereby appointed as REHABILITATION RECEIVER of the petitioner and his bond is fixed at ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS.

Pursuant to Section 7, Rule 4 of the aforesaid Interim Rules, the petitioner is hereby directed to immediately serve a copy of this Stay Order on the Rehabilitation Receiver appointed by this court who shall manifest his acceptance or non-acceptance of his appointment not later than ten (10) days from receipt of this Order and put up his bond within the same period.

The petitioner is likewise directed to publish this Stay Order in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks before the scheduled initial hearing.

The initial hearing on the petition is hereby fixed on November 6, 2002 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning.

SO ORDERED.

Cagayan de Oro City, September 16, 2002.

(Sgd.) HON. EPIFANIO T. NACAYA, CESO V
Presiding Judge

(Sgd) ATTY. MA. THERESA ABAN-CAMANNONG
Clerk of Court V
RTU, Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

(PDI--Nov. 21 & 28, 2002)

National Power Corporation

November 25, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Power Corporation (NPC) of the Republic of the Philippines invites all registered oil-based fuel suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the additional oil-based fuel requirements of NPC, its IPPs and SPUG Power Plants and Barges for CY 2003.

The complete sets of eligibility requirements/bidding documents are available for issuance at the Office of the Corporate Fuel Management Department (CFMD) and Secretariat Contracts Award Committee, Bldg. 2, Ground Floor, NPC-OBC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel/Fax No. 9245311, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of five hundred pesos (P500.00)

Registered prospective bidders shall be evaluated as to eligibility based on a non-discretionary "pass-fail" criteria prescribed in the eligibility requirements/tender documents

The requirements are tabulated hereunder:

Schedule I - Diesel Fuel

Plant	Vol. (Kliters)	Approved Budget for Contract (Peso)	Issuance of Eligibility Requirements Tender Docs.	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission of Eligibility Docs/Bids
Pinamucan DP	400	5,493,481.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec. 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
PB 110	867	15,113,972.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec. 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Bauang DP	1,750	24,229,881.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec. 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Subic II DP	675	8,126,145.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Thermal I	2,330	28,147,896.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec. 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Thermal II	949	11,464,529.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
LBGT I	3,136	37,884,894.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
LBGT II	1,000	12,080,642.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Diesel I	1,620	22,511,169.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002

Schedule II - Fuel Oil

Plant	Vol. (Kliters)	Approved Budget for Contract (Peso)	Issuance of Eligibility Requirements Tender Docs.	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission of Eligibility Docs/Bids
Pinamucan DP	10,903	95,745,116.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Rosario DP	112,706	1,036,070,038.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Bauang DP	12,000	106,419,667.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Subic II DP	47,000	407,159,530.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Ogden-Edison DP	20,000	173,578,073.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Sual CFTPP	7,200	63,544,089.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Thermal I	72,012	649,726,003.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Thermal II	19,402	172,893,130.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
Cebu Diesel I	11,590	103,279,030.00	Nov. 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002
NMPC I	10,000	91,502,860.00	Nov 28, 2002	Dec 06, 2002	Dec. 19, 2002

The Contracts Award Committee (CAC), NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders(s).

Any inquiry regarding the above invitation shall be addressed to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) SILVANO C. ZANORIA
OIC-Senior Vice President and
Chairman, CAC, NPC-Residual

(PDI--Nov. 28 & Dec. 4, 2002)

Cebu Pacific challenges PAL claims on Japan slots

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU Pacific Air said yesterday it would challenge Philippine Airlines Inc.'s application for the two new Japan entitlements that the country got in late October, a source from the Civil Aeronautics Board revealed.

While PAL was the only air carrier with a pending application with the CAB for the new entitlements, the source said Cebu Pacific officials had already expressed serious interest in filing its own request soon.

He said Cebu Pacific could still file an application as the CAB had not yet decided to whom the new flight entitlements would go.

These, he explained, would only be available in April.

The Philippine air panel succeeded in getting two additional "coefficients" from Japan during air talks held in Tokyo on Oct. 28 to 29.

One coefficient is equivalent to one narrow-bodied jet like the 179-seater Boeing 757. Planes with more than 300 seats, on the other hand, fall under the two-coefficient category.

In an earlier interview, CAB vice chair Adelberto Yap said the additional two coefficients that the country got from Japan were still expandable to up to nine new weekly flights if the airlines that would be granted these entitlements would agree to "reconfigure" their aircraft.

PAL president Avelino Zapanta said in another interview that the air carrier was already studying the possibility of reconfiguring its 302-seater Airbus A330s, although no concrete plans had been laid yet as the airline was still struggling to gain back its Japanese passengers.

ICTSI to rebuild business

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. plans to rebuild its international business to the scale of former subsidiary ICTSI International Holdings Corp.—earlier sold to the Hutchison group of Hong Kong for $400 million—in two to three years.

During the inauguration of a P700-million container handling equipment at ICTSI's flagship Manila International Container Terminal yesterday, ICTSI senior vice president and MICT general manager Francis Andrews told reporters the company was looking at five new offshore locations.

He said in the first quarter of 2003, ICTSI might be able to announce more developments on its renewed overseas expansion.

In a bid to pare down foreign debts, ICTSI divested its stake in IIHC in 2001. It thus lost most of its overseas businesses as IIHC operates eight container terminals in six countries—Argentina, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Tanzania and Thailand. The sellout also included ICTSI's Mexican cruise port Ensenada Cruiseport Village SA.

ICTSI, however, has kept the newly awarded port concession in Suape, Brazil, where operations were initially slowed down by some labor problems. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Consumer confidence rose slightly in US

WASHINGTON—Consumers' confidence in the economy rebounded in November after sinking to a nine-year low a month earlier, raising hopes that consumer spending will be strong this holiday shopping season and continue to support the economy.

Other reports on Tuesday also suggested the nation could get through its rough patch without sliding into a new recession: The economy grew more briskly in the summer than previously thought and new-home sales slowed in October but still posted the third best month on record.

The latest batch of economic news indicated that consumers—the main force keeping the economy going this year—will keep their pocketbooks and wallets open wide enough to prevent the economic recovery from fizzling out, economists said.

"Shell-shocked consumers paused for awhile in the fall but now they are feeling better," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo. "The confidence report ... points to a decent holiday shopping season. I don't think consumers will turn out to be the Scrooges that many feared."

Consumer confidence, after sagging for five months, rose in November, lifted by improved expectations about employment and income, the Conference Board said. The private research group's Consumer Confidence Index jumped to 84.1 from 79.6 in October, a nine-year low. *AP*

Japan stocks up on optimism

SINGAPORE—Japanese stocks rose on optimism about banking reform on Wednesday, while the dollar slipped after weaker-than-expected US consumer confidence data and a fall on Wall Street.

Other Asian stock markets were slightly weaker as the disappointing US confidence number raised questions about a sustained recovery in Asia's biggest export market.

Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei average was up 0.76 percent to 8,891.09, while the broader Topix index put on 0.73 percent to 870.33.

The Nikkei lost 1.35 percent on Tuesday after rising 7 percent in a five-day winning run.

"Today is very important, said Zenshiro Mizuno, senior managing director at Marusan Securities. "It will determine whether we stay on this current uptrend or get back on a downward track. If Japanese stocks truly are recovering, then we should be able to move higher even when Wall Street takes a step back."

The Tokyo market started softer after the disappointing US data sent the Nasdaq down 2.5 percent on Tuesday, but traders then switched focus to a 0.5-percent rise in Nasdaq futures in after-hours trade.

Nasdaq futures were boosted by rising shares of computer maker Sun Microsystems Inc. after the tech bellwether's chief financial officer said he expected the company's fiscal second-quarter revenue to be in line with analysts' forecasts.

Japanese banks were in the money ahead of the government's reform plan due at the end of the week.

Financial Services Minister Heizo Takenaka is expected to submit a timetable for implementing ideas outlined in an earlier reform report on speeding up bad loan disposal to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's top economic advisory panel on Friday. *Reuters*

United Airlines seeks $1.8-B loan guarantee

WASHINGTON—Key members of Congress are pressing the Bush administration to approve a $1.8-billion loan guarantee for United Airlines so it can avert bankruptcy, while the company late on Tuesday released more details of its recovery plan after criticism it had not been thorough enough.

Led by House of Representatives Speaker Dennis Hastert, most of the Illinois and Virginia congressional delegations have pressed senior White House, economic and transportation leaders recently to help the Chicago-based carrier.

Separately, United said on Tuesday that it had identified $14 billion in cost cuts and revenue enhancements to support its recovery plan. The company also sought to clear up confusion over its labor concessions, which it said would total $5.2 billion after shrinking its operations.

United released the updated financial figures after some competitors questioned whether its recovery plan, which includes the loan guarantee, would be enough to keep it in business.

One analysis submitted to the stabilization board by Northwest Airlines concluded that United would run out of cash at some point in 2004, even if it got the guarantee for private financing. *Reuters*

Taiwan, China trade relations remain strained

TAIPEI—One of Taiwan's greatest hopes when it joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) was that it would help solve thorny trade issues that plague relations with rival and fellow WTO debutant China.

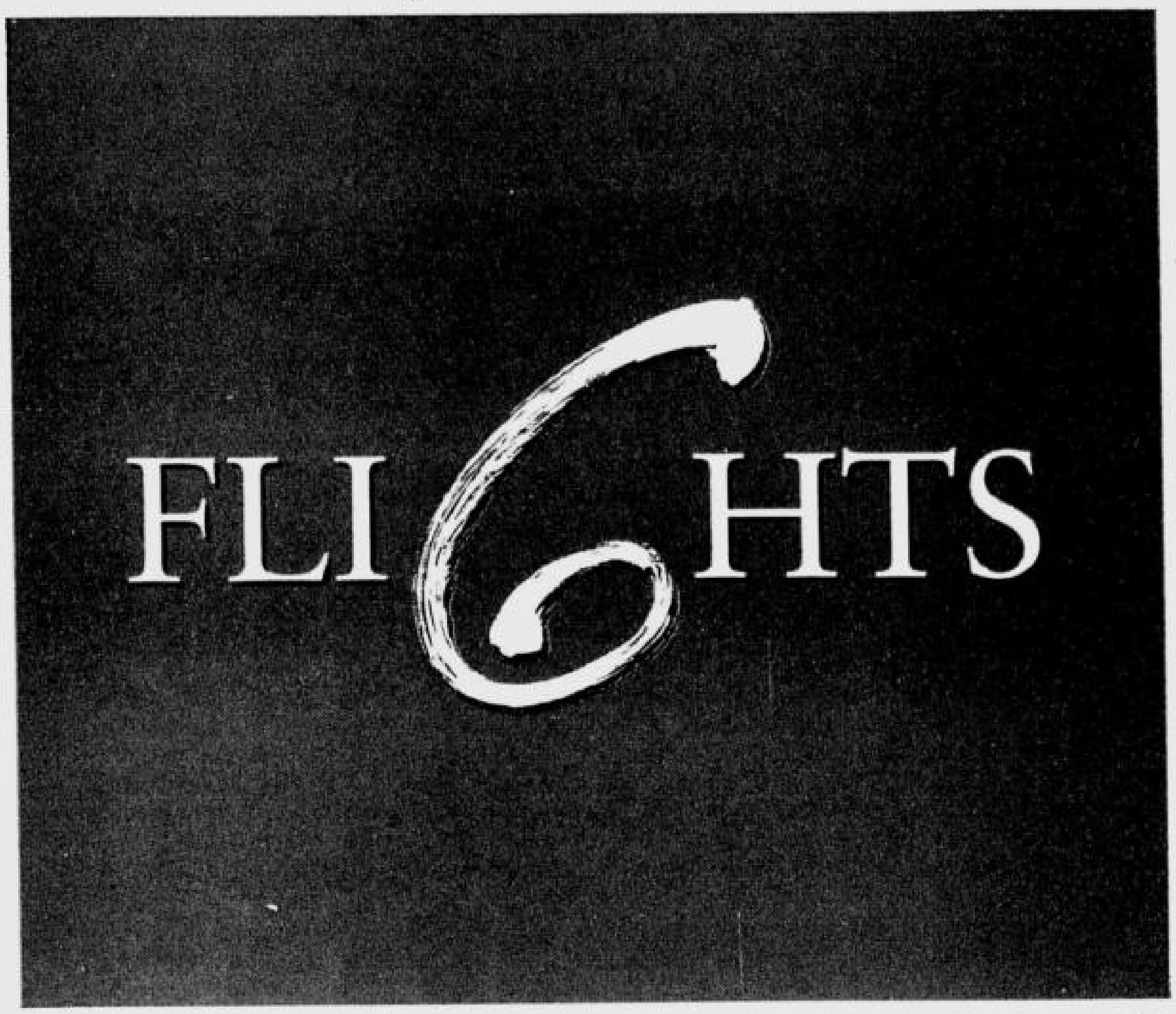
Now, nearly a year later, the island's first representative to the trade body knows how difficult it is to get his Chinese counterpart to sit at the same negotiating table.

China still views Taiwan as a renegade province that must be reunited with the mainland, by force if necessary.

"Taiwan is a full member of WTO, and has very encouraging working relationships with all other members ... except China," lamented Yen Ching-chang, WTO representative and a former finance minister, in a recent telephone interview with Reuters.

When Taiwan and three other WTO members complained about China's steel tariffs, the Chinese held bilateral discussions with each member except Taiwan. And only after Taiwan threatened to lodge a formal complaint did it write a letter to Yen. But, in Chinese, and not in any of the WTO's official languages.

"China still refuses to treat us as an equal. That is really the most important obstacle for possible dialogue on three links," Yen said, referring to direct transport, postal and commercial links with China. *Reuters*



Asia Miles

Cathay Pacific adds a 6th daily flight to Hong Kong beginning January 2, 2003 – departing daily from Manila at 9 a.m. and from Hong Kong at 7:40 p.m. Enjoy more flexibility with more flights!

Now you're really flying.

www.cathaypacific.com
CATHAY PACIFIC

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Asteroid as big as soccer field narrowly misses Earth
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Loss of Oakleys doomed Sabaya
GMA, Bush rejoice; forme hostages heav sigh of relief

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Bisolvon awarded 'Best Cough Medicine Brand'

Bisolvon, a quality product of Boehringer-Ingelheim Philippines, Inc. in getting rid of cough, has been awarded the "Best Cough Medicine Brand" during the 18th Annual People's Choice Awards held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC).

The award was given by the Who's Who in the Philippines Award Foundation and the National Consumers Affairs Foundation in recognition of Bisolvon's proven efficacy in promoting cough relief among consumers throughout the country.

"This award is a tribute to the millions of Filipino consumers who believe in Bisolvon's ability in getting rid of cough," Bisolvon brand manager Myrna Lim said. "Our loyal patrons can be assured that our product will continue to provide the same high-standard when it comes to cough relief and medication," she added.

The "Who's Who in the Philippines Consumers Excellence Award" recognizes outstanding Filipino consumer products, services, manufacturers or companies based on their excellent quality of services and consumer pricing. Senator Robert Barbers, Commission of Elections chair Benjamin Abalos and Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos were present during the annual rites.

Under the generic name Bromhexine, Bisolvon is classified as a mucolytic, meaning it helps treat productive cough or cough with phlegm. It also helps to clean out phlegm by giving you the feeling of "clean lungs."

In 60 ml and 120 ml bottles, Bisolvon syrup is available in leading drugstores nationwide. Bisolvon is also available in tablet form and soon, it its maximum cough control formula – Bisolvon Forte Capsules.

MOTHER EARTH INDUCTION

Mother Earth Unlimited recently celebrated the organization's 4th Anniversary with a dinner reception and ballroom dancing. One of the highlights of the event was the Induction of Officers and Directors for 2002-2003. In photo are (from left): founding president and inducting officer Raul Contreras; lawyer Domingo D. Fregillana, junior-corporate secretary & legal counsel; Lucito Bertol, vice chair; Sonia Mendoza, president; Teresita B. Choa, chair; Estelita Reyes, treasurer; and Cherie Manzano-Carlos, public relations officer. Mother Earth Unlimited is the country's leading non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and care of the environment through ecological waste management, reforestation and ecologically friendly practices.

2002 ASIAN FORMULA 3 CHALLENGE WINNER

British driver Mark Goddard (center) of team Goddard, sponsored this year for the first time by Ambi Pur Car, the superior car perfume, and Castrol, has first place in round 13 of the 2002 Asian Formula Challenge at the Subic International Raceway. The Asian Formula Challenge kicked off last April at the Batangas Race Circuit before traveling to China for three legs and Malaysia for two. The series is organized in accordance with the international sporting code of the Federation Internationale De L'Automobile (FIA), the general prescriptions applicable to all FIA championships and the provisions of all National Sporting Regulations (ASN) in which the races are held. Photo also shows SBMA chair Felicito Payumo and Sara Lee Philippines Sales Director Gil Celis with the winners (from left) round 13 and second and third place winners Enzo Pastor of Team T.E.C. and Richard Joson of Denso JF3 Racing.

Simply Menudo

THE GOODNESS of fresh tomatoes and the tangy aroma of onion and garlic have been captured in Mama Sita's Meat Stew Mix perfect for the classic Filipino dishes menudo and afritada.

With a simple change of and a slight variety in ingredients, Mama Sita's Meat Stew Mix makes cooking menudo and afritada easier and less time-consuming without sacrificing their original tastes.

Available in 30g and 454g packets, Mama Sita's Meat Stew Mix can also be used as a seasoning for other dishes requiring a tomato-garlic-onion-based flavor.

Manufactured by Marigold Commodities Corp., a Filipino company owned by a family of cooks and food lovers, Mama Sita's mixes and sauces are all-natural and preservative-free, with a heritage of cooking excellence that lives on in every product.

Other mixes by Mama Sita's are breading (chapelure) mix, peanut sauce (kare-kare) mix, Oriental gravy (palabok) mix, and spicy sauce (caldereta) mix.

Mama Sita's. Ang May Alam ng Pinoy na Ulam.

Bookwriting techniques

THE ATV Speakers Network (896-8790) is conducting a training program for people desiring to write and publish a book. The program on "How to Write and Publish a Book" is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 30, 8 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Splendido Garden Apartelle at 99 Urban Avenue, Makati City. Topics include: Getting Started, Overcoming Writers' Block, Writing vs. Publishing, Selecting a Topic, Writing Clearly, Essential Parts of the book, Copyright, ISBN and CIP registration, Financing the Project, Marketing and Promoting the Book. Call Josie or Judith at 896-8790 or 899-8441 for the details.

12th Li'l Hands Club

LI'L HANDS PRE-CHRISTMAS FUN DAY

Once again, Li'l Hands Club, the kiddy arts & crafts club of Amspec, held its pre-Christmas big day fun day at the 7th floor of the RCBC tower 2, RCBC Plaza, Ayala corner Gil Puyat, Salcedo Village, Makati City last Nov. 16. The Family Fun Day started with a 2-hour creative Christmas arts & crafts workshop. Li'l Hands Club members got a chance to join workshops across all ages. Workshop for ages 4 to 6 was "Crayola Wacky Christmas Stocking"; for ages 7 to 9, "Li'l hands Colorful Christmas Windsock"; and for ages 10 and above it was "Mongol-Lotus-Sanford Cartoon Christmas Poster". Children loved the "create-your-own" activities for this season of hope. Parents too, loved the fun arts and crafts learning in the Mongol-Lotus-Sanford module.

PAG 5th annual confab

IN CELEBRATION of the National Week for the Gifted, the Philippine Association for the Gifted (PAG) will hold its 5th annual convention titled "The Challenge of Unfulfilled Potential: The Underachieving Gifted." The convention will be held at the Camella Dahlia Emilia Function Room, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Ayala Center, Makati today, Nov. 28 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Professor Den-Mo Tsai, a well-known expert on the underachieving gifted child will deliver the keynote address and speak about the issue. For inquiries, call the PAG secretariat at 687-1122 or e-mail at pagifted@i-next.net.

BMAP holds 10th GMM

THE BANK Marketing Association of the Philippines (BMAP) will hold its 10th General Membership Meeting at the Yakal Function Room, Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City, today, Nov. 28. Guest speaker for the 10th GMM is David Nugent, vice president for media and corporate communications of Metro Pacific Corp. and will share insights on the topic "Developing an Effective PR Campaign." The 10th GMM will also conduct the elections of new BMAP officers and directors. BMAP is an organization of decision makers in the fields of product development and management, market research, bank advertising and marketing, corporate communications, public relations, corporate and retail banking, market services and corporate planning. For inquiries, call Alice Medina at 896-1893 or 890-6325.

Riverbanks opens night market

THIS Christmas, head for Riverbanks Center's Night Market Baratillo. A special treat is in store for all shoppers. Riverbanks Night Market Baratillo is located at the riverside's amphitheater. It has more than 100 stalls offering quality products like ladies and men's apparel, children's toys and clothes, leather goods, novelties and accessories, home décor and native gift items at low prices. Riverbanks is open from 4 p.m. to 12 midnight, Mondays to Sundays. The Night Baratillo will also hold a series of band competitions dubbed "Let's Jam" today, Nov. 28. The grand finals will be on Dec. 7. Nightly shows will also be featured. Sing along in the "Singalis Videoke Challenge", laugh at the "Comedy Nights", move to the groove of "Dance Exhibition Showdowns." For more information, call 948-9794 or 934-1789.

Sen. Legarda at tech fair

SENATE Majority Leader Loren Legarda will keynote this year's opening rites of the widely acclaimed Taiwan Products and Technology Fair today, Nov. 28 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. Sen. Legarda enjoins enjoins Filipino entrepreneurs to visit the event and take a close look at its offering to discover the products, technology, or even business formula that would steer companies to the path of development. The 10th annual presentation of Taiwan Products and Technology Fair presents a paradigm shift in rebuilding trade and partnerships between the Philippines and Taiwan. The exhibit runs from Nov. 28 to Dec. 1. For more details, call the event manager Expotrade at 895-2392 or 895-2363.

BITS Clips

Retreat for widows

THE ANNUAL retreat for widows sponsored by Pieta, a spiritual organization of widows, will be held at the Claret Formation Center Retreat House in Sanville Subdivision, Quezon City, on Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1. Fr. Alex Zeus Hubilla SVD will be the retreat master. Fr. DP (Delfin Paulino Felipe), Pieta spiritual director, will also attend. For particulars, call Crescing de Jesus at 531-7267, Aleli Ambrosio, 638-8400, Josie Dajac, 927-8819, Ellen Pampolina, 522-8858, Rose Cruz, 922-0428, or Estela B. Cerdenia, (043)404-0433.

Gym, spa business in TLRC seminar

MEN AND women today are more acutely aware of the value of exercise and workouts and health baths. The phenomenon has invigorated the gym and spa business, creating a greater need for such clubs in subdivisions and business communities. Individuals on the lookout for business prospects may consider investing their money in a gym or spa club. They may enroll in a seminar on Operation and Management of a Gym and Spa slated at the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center Nov. 28 and 29, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For inquiries, call TLRC at 633-5709 and 633-6728 or at 637-4108 to 12 local 605.

Gas station business

ASPIRING oil entrepreneurs can operate a gasoline station business on a P165,000 investment. Techniques for the successful operation of a gas station are discussed in the seminar on Establishing Your Own Gas Filling Station slated Nov. 28 and 29, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center. Topics include: market for new petroleum players, background on the deregularization of the petroleum industry in the Philippines, procedures for running a gas filling station, and market strategies to enhance business profits. For inquiries, call TLRC at 633-5709 and 633-6728, or at 637-4108 to 12 local 605.

Product FILES

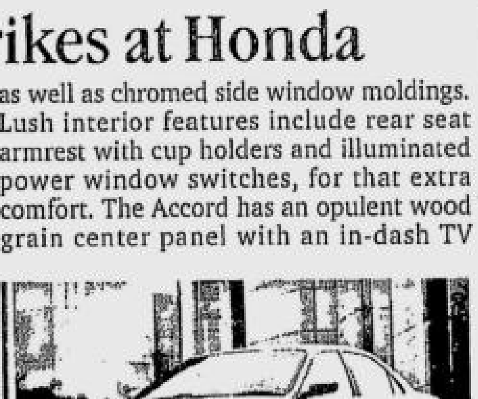
Accord Madness strikes at Honda

THE MADNESS is back at Honda! This time, spotlight is on the Accord as it goes with its biggest savings ever. Get Honda's early Christmas treat happening only on Nov. 29 and 30 at all authorized dealerships nationwide. A cash discount of as much as P150, 000 awaits Accord buyers on the Madness days.

Savings do not end there. A discount sale is also up for selected Accord accessories on the Madness days, making the most of hard-earned money's worth.

Designed to be a world executive class sedan, the Accord offers an excellent 2.0liter in-line four-cylinder VTec engine that delivers increased power, reduced vibration and extremely low emissions. The VTec engine operates with Honda's renowned Multi-point Programmed Fuel Injection (PGM-FI), with a 16-bit powertrain control module (PCM) for much higher fuel efficiency. The Accord's double wishbone front and rear suspension gives unmatched stability for smoother handling and drive.

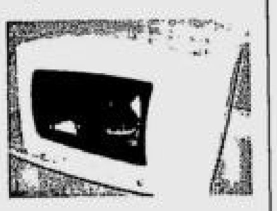
On the outside, the Accord features a sleek design for the front grille and bumper, as well as chromed side window moldings. Lush interior features include rear seat armrest with cup holders and illuminated power window switches, for that extra comfort. The Accord has an opulent wood grain center panel with an in-dash TV monitor and a Pioneer CD tuner to keep you company during the long hours stuck in traffic.



Don't miss the frenzy! The Accord Madness will be on Nov. 29 and 30 only. All Honda dealerships will extend hours from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For further inquiries, visit or contact the nearest dealer or log on to www.hondaphil.com. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4738 Series of 2002.

Product FILES

Galanz: all-around partner



ENJOY home cooking with the highly versatile and efficient Galanz Microwave Ovens from Chevalier Philippines. Manufactured using German technology, Galanz Microwave Ovens are safe and convenient to use with the unique multi anti-emission and super-magnetic features. You get radiation-free and guaranteed non-carcinogenic home cooked meals in double-quick time.

With over four models available, you can choose the type that fits your needs. Exported to more than 80 countries, Galanz Microwave Ovens are distributed by Chevalier HK Limited Philippines and available through local dealers nationwide. Call 751-1743 to 44 or 752-0243 to 45.

Japan retail sales fall for 19th straight month

TOKYO—Sales at Japanese stores deteriorated for a 19th straight month in October as worries about jobs and falling incomes persuaded consumers to keep their wallets in their pockets.

The data released by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry on Wednesday underlined the problems facing the world's second-biggest economy as government plans being hammered out to tackle bad loans could add to the short-term pain.

The ministry said retail sales fell 2.8 percent in October from a year earlier—slightly better than a 3.0-percent drop in September.

Month-on-month figures showed retail sales fell 2.0 percent from September on a seasonally adjusted basis.

"Personal income is declining rather steeply, so it's no surprise that consumption is not strong," said Naoki Murakami, an economist at BNP Paribas in Tokyo.

Personal consumption has been holding steady despite a sluggish economy—July-September gross domestic product data showed private-sector consumption, which makes up 55 percent of GDP, rising 0.8 percent from the previous quarter.

But personal spending is seen at greater risk as wages and job conditions are expected to deteriorate further.

A poll in Tuesday's Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspaper showed that this year's average winter bonus—a key part of income for most Japanese—was expected to fall 5.16 percent from last year to 727,203 yen ($5,983), the first drop in three years.

A Reuters poll of 20 economists showed they expected October's unemployment rate, due for release on Friday, to revisit the postwar high of 5.5 percent marked last December.

The ministry said at a briefing that poor sales of personal computers and other appliances along with a decline in winter clothing sales due to unseasonably warm weather in October had contributed to the overall decline.

The only good news was for car makers, with sales up 2.3 percent year-on-year, helped by demand for new ranges of cheap, small cars aimed mainly at young, single city dwellers. *Reuters*

Australia cuts growth target due to drought

CANBERRA—Australia's government cut its economic growth forecast on Wednesday as drought devastates crops around the country but, in a surprise move, did not lower its anticipated budget surplus.

In his mid-year review, Treasurer Peter Costello cut his forecast for growth in 2002/03 to 3 percent, down from a previous forecast in May of 3.75 percent and in line with market forecasts for a 3.2-percent expansion this year.

Australia's gross domestic product grew by 3.9 percent in the year ended June 30.

Costello said the Australian economy remained resilient despite unfavorable international conditions and the severe impact of the drought, offering what one economist described as a "brave" forecast of 4 percent growth in 2003/04.

"Look, 2003/04 depends to some degree on whether or not the drought breaks . . . If the drought breaks, then we'll have good growth. If it doesn't break, then we'll be winding back these forecasts for 2003/04," Costello told a news conference.

The drought has slashed crop production by as much as 60 percent, forcing the government to cut its forecast for export growth to just 2 percent this year—far short of the 6 percent predicted in the budget.

The forecast for non-farm growth for 2002/03 was unchanged at a solid 3.75 percent, while inflation was pegged at 2.75 percent.

Costello unveiled a further A$327 million ($183 million) over three years to help farmers stricken by the drought, which is not expected to break until March or April.

Analysts said the bullish forecast for 2003/04 suggests the Australian economy may be strong enough to persuade the central bank to raise interest rates next year—bucking the trend of other nations where rates are still being cut. *Reuters*

Survey reveals pessimism over HK economy

HONG KONG—A survey released Wednesday by Hong Kong's Chamber of Commerce found little optimism for an economic turnaround next year, but revealed a guarded confidence that business conditions in the territory will improve in 2004.

The survey, made public during the chamber's ninth Annual Hong Kong Business Summit, found 42 percent of respondents expected economic growth to remain stagnant, although more than a third expected conditions to worsen.

Just 14 percent of 361 companies which participated in the survey thought the economy would improve next year.

"For 2004, however, the picture changes markedly, with 42.3 percent of respondents expecting the economy to be stronger and 2.3 percent much stronger," an overview of the survey said.

"However, 29.3 percent think the economy will remain the same, 20.4 percent think it will be weaker and 5.5 percent expect it to be much weaker." Hong Kong's economy grew only 0.1 percent last year amid the global slowdown after soaring 10.5 percent in 2000.

Economic growth returned in the second quarter of this year with 0.5-percent expansion from a year earlier, compared with a 0.5-percent contraction in the first three months.

The jobless rate eased in the September quarter, according to official data, but economists remain wary as personal bankruptcies continue to rise.

The territory's unemployment rate dropped for a second successive quarter in the three months to September as a number of sectors began hiring staff, the Census and Statistics Department said.

The unemployment rate for July-September was 7.4 percent.

In the three months to August, the jobless rate had fallen for the first time in 20 months to 7.6 percent after reaching a record 7.8 percent in the July quarter.

"The job market improved in a number of industries and it shows that our economy is recovering. The unemployment rate will continue to improve in the next few months," said Paul Tang, economist with Bank of East Asia.

Government figures released in October also showed bankruptcies in Hong Kong rose to a record high in September. *AFP*

Announcement

Manulife

CMG
...of Australia

To all CMG Life and Plans Clients

We are pleased to inform you that Manulife Financial (Manulife) has obtained regulatory approval for the purchase of CMG's life and pre-need business from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA). This transaction was first announced on October 17, 2002.

High on CMG's list of priorities during the process of divesting their life and pre-need business was their desire that CMG clients continue to deal with a stable and service-oriented company. For this reason, CBA chose Manulife. Consequently, for you the CMG customer, there will be no change in your policy/plan or its servicing. All contractual obligations provided under CMG in-force policies/plans will continue to be honored. The terms and conditions under which all CMG life insurance policies and pension and education plans have been issued remain unchanged.

Manulife Philippines will assume the continued servicing of all in-force CMG policies. Manulife will ensure that all CMG clients continue to receive the excellent policyholder services they have been accustomed to receiving. At Manulife, we take great pride in providing our valued customers with efficient quality service. We are committed to helping consumers reach their financial and lifestyle goals through sound advice, smart solutions and competitive products.

About Manulife Financial

Canadian-based Manulife Financial is a leading global provider of financial protection and wealth management products, including life insurance, pensions, annuities and group benefits in Canada, the United States and Asia. Manulife, currently enjoys one of the largest market capitalizations of any publicly-traded life insurance company in Canada. Through its extensive network of employees, agents and distribution partners, Manulife Financial offers clients a diverse range of financial protection products and wealth management services. Funds under management by Manulife Financial were Cdn$139.2 billion as at September 30, 2002.

Manulife Financial Corporation trades as 'MFC' on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX), New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), and under '0945' on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong (SEHK). Manulife Financial can be found on the Internet at www.manulife.com.

Manulife Philippines and Manulife Financial Plans are locally incorporated subsidiaries of Manulife Financial. Manulife Philippines has been serving Filipino policyholders for more than 95 years. The company currently ranks 4th in terms of total premium income in the "Individual Life Insurance" category. Manulife Financial Plans was established and launched two years ago to address the growing savings market by offering pension and education plans. Both companies together maintain an agency force of more than 1,500.

Moving forward

CMG Life and Plans will continue to operate as a separate, wholly-owned Manulife subsidiary. An array of systems and operational groundwork is necessary to transfer and integrate CMG's in-force policies/plans under Manulife Philippines and Manulife Financial Plans. We expect these transition projects to be completed by the start of the Fourth Quarter of 2003.

Between now and the end of the year, there will be no fundamental changes in the manner in which you normally transact business. Any forthcoming changes in your current arrangements will be communicated to you in advance. At Manulife, we have every intention of ensuring that all our customers enjoy high levels of customer care and service.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. On behalf of Manulife, allow me to welcome you to the Manulife family. We look forward to serving you in the future.

Sincerely,

RENATO A. VERGEL DE DIOS
Country Manager
Manulife Financial

Question: **How will this development affect my CMG policy/plan?**
Answer: There will be no change in the terms and conditions of your policies/plans. All contractual obligations under CMG's in-force policies will be honored, based on their original terms and conditions.

Question: **Should I continue to transact business with CMG?**
Answer: Yes, you should continue to transact business with CMG. CMG, while becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Manulife, will continue to operate as a separate entity. We will notify you of any changes to this arrangement prior to implementation.

Question: **Should I continue payment of my CMG policies/plans?**
Answer: Yes. It is in your best interest to keep your policy/plan in-force.
In the event an agent from another company advises you to lapse your existing CMG policy/plan and to take out a new one from his company, please contact the CMG Call Center at 636-2721. We will help you make an informed decision concerning what options are available to you under your existing policy/plan.

Question: **What will happen to my CMG Agent?**
Answer: Your CMG agent will continue to provide the service you require with respect to your CMG policies/plans. At the end of the year, your agent will be given the option to join Manulife Philippines and to continue servicing your policies. If you need to contact your agent or should you require any further servicing assistance, you may contact CMG's Call Centre at 636-2721.

Question: **Can I still purchase a CMG life insurance, pension and/or education plan?**
Answer: Yes. CMG life insurance, pension & education plans will be available for sale until the end of the year. These policies/plans are secure and will be honored based on their original terms and conditions as all in-force CMG policies/plans.

For additional questions and concerns, please continue to call CMG's customer service hotline at 636-2721 (Press 1 for Customer Service and Product Information) or toll free at 1-800-1-888-0999 from outside Metro Manila. You may also email us at customerservice@cmgphil.com

MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Kia Motors eyes global leadership

Text and photos
by Charles E. Buban

KIA KCV-I

KIA Motors banks on developing new technologies to make its vehicles much safer and more fun to drive

KIA Sorento

NOI-MYUNG

KIA KCV-II

SEOUL—The world should pay attention: Although it's way too soon to call South Korea's second largest automaker "phenomenal," the good news is greatly welcomed at Kia Motors.

During the media launch of the 2002 Seoul Motor Show at the Seoul Convention and Exhibition Center last week, Kia said it hopes to join the world's top five automakers by 2010, producing five million vehicles a year.

This means the company now owned by Hyundai (South Korea's largest automaker), will one day join—and possibly dislodge in ranking—General Motors, Ford, Toyota, Volkswagen AG, and DaimlerChrysler which are today's biggest names in the auto industry.

Just how will Kia do it?

"We are investing aggressively in developing new technologies while building a global production and management structure in the major cities and economic centers of the world," said Mong-Koo Chung, Kia chair and CEO.

Good times ahead

In welcoming a crowd of local and foreign journalists who attended the motor show, Kia president and CEO Noi-Myung Kim announced his company is expected to post $9.9 million in sales next year.

Kim added that his company has targeted $11.0 million in sales for this year after posting record sales of $10.2 million in 2001.

Analysts also agree with Kim's optimism as they see Korean auto sales cruising along next year, with economic growth estimated in the 5 percent range in 2003 and possible price cuts for cars due to increased competition.

"Automobile output will return to pre-Asian financial crisis levels next year," said one auto analyst based here.

Concept cars

After a flurry of Kia vehicle introductions such as the subcompact Rio RX-V wagon, the compact Spectra sedan/hatchback, the mid-size Magentis luxury sedan and the Sedona minivan in the past couple of years, Kia presented two concept vehicles during the motor show.

One is the KCV-I, a multipurpose vehicle that incorporates the features of a sedan, a wagon and an MPV. The other is KCV-II, a revolutionary crossover vehicle that mixes pickup practicality and coupé-like driving pleasure.

Both vehicles were first revealed during the 2001 Frankfurt Motor Show and 2002 Paris Motor Show, respectively.

Among Kia's production vehicles, it was the Sorento that enjoyed the best limelight.

This eye-catching SUV is distinct from the Sportage as it was styled with the European consumers in mind.

Columbian Autocar, Kia's arm here in the Philippines, is hopeful it could bring this 3.5-L V6 crossover in the Philippines.

"It has lots of potential and can really challenge other vehicles in its class," said Eddie Limon, Columbian Autocar VP for marketing.

Building a name

Kia was founded in 1944 as a manufacturer of steel tubing and bicycle parts and quickly evolved into the manufacture of motorcycles and trucks.

Kia's Hwasung manufacturing plant now covers more than 3.3 million square meters. Total Kia production capacity has soared to more than 1.15 million vehicles a year.

Today, more than two million Kia vehicles ply the roads of more than 160 countries all over the world.

Youth urge gov't to ensure integrity of emission tests

MEMBERS of a so-called "Youth Against Killer Smoke" (YAKS) movement are urging the government to ensure the integrity of vehicle emission tests, which they claim to be the people's only defense against deadly pollution.

YAKS activists cautioned the departments of Industry and of Transportation and Communications on the possible proliferation of private emission centers (PETCs), warning that these could go the way of drug testing centers which had mushroomed at incredible proportions to the detriment of such a "noble" regulatory process.

Drug test is required for the acquisition of driver's license and emission test for the registration of vehicles.

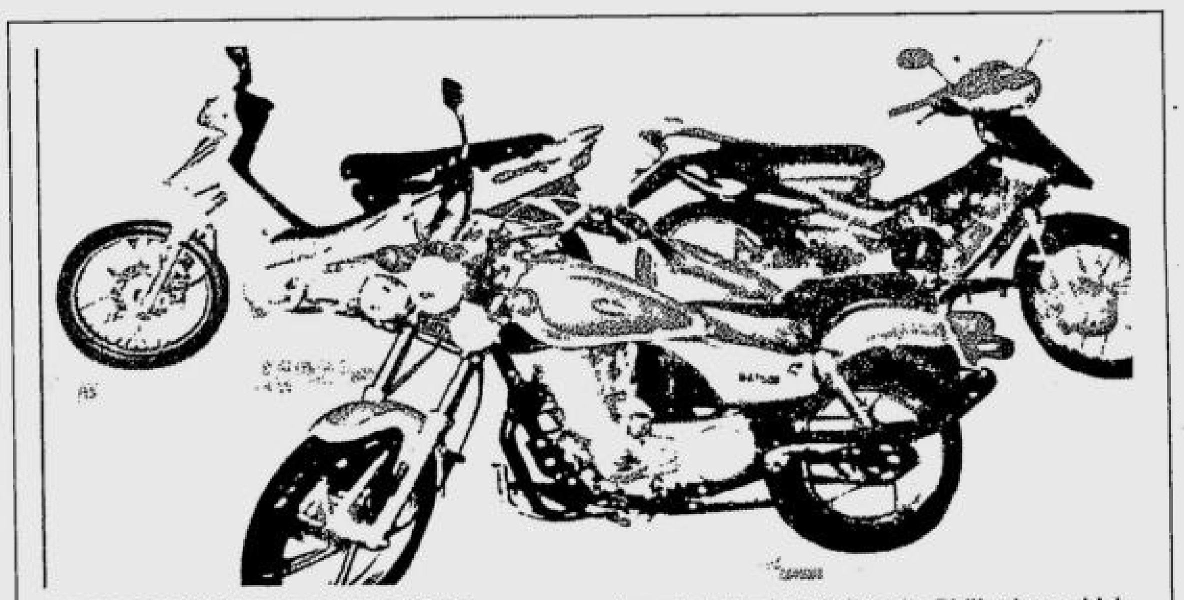
"With the cutthroat competition arising from the proliferation of drug testing centers, many of them are reportedly compelled to allow nonappearance if only to attract more applicants and generate enough income to survive. We shouldn't allow the same thing to happen to PETCs, which can also become vulnerable to fixing and other anomalies because of unrestrained competition," said Mike Barrido of YAKS.

"This is especially so, because emission testing is our frontline defense against deadly vehicular pollutants, which account for 70 percent of the country's air pollution and the increasing incidence of silent but brutal deaths from respiratory ailments, especially among drivers and children," Barrido added.

With the very huge capital outlay involved in establishing the emission centers, it is feared that the PETC owners, who are reportedly posting heavy losses, will be hardpressed to recover their investments through every conceivable means within the very limited period that they are allowed to operate.

From January next year, they have only 10 months or up to October to break even since their function will be taken over by the so-called Motor Vehicle Inspection System (MVIS) facilities in November 2003.

The MVIS is scheduled to be bid out to the private sector starting December this year.



FAST GAINING ACCEPTANCE
Directly imported and distributed by Etasi Motorbikes and Scooters as well as manufactured and exported by China's No. 1 exporter of motorbikes for 2001, Etasi motorbikes and scooters are fast gaining acceptance in the local market, according to Etasi president Jose L. Yumul, who also disclosed that they are delivered CBUs (complete body units) to the Philippines which makes them of better quality. Etasi general manager Emmanuel T. Yumul said the acceptability hinges on the durability, design and affordability of the product as well as the availability of backup spare parts. The Etasi motorbikes and scooters showroom is located at 1616 Quezon Ave., Barangay South Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City.

RPN AUTO EXTREME AUTO BYTES

Catch AUTO EXTREME every Saturday, 4 PM on RPN 9 and log on to www.autoextreme.tv

Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in the Motoring section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

What is the proper way to break in a new car?

—Gregory To

WHEN you think about breaking in a new vehicle, think of it as something like a physical mating. Not between you and your new car, but between each piston ring and its corresponding cylinder wall in the engine.

The main purpose of breaking in is to allow the piston rings to "seat," or conform to the exact shape of the cylinder walls so that they make a tight seal. When the piston rings are broken in or seated, they do not allow combustion gases to escape the combustion chamber past the piston rings into the crankcase section of the engine. These escaping gases or "blow-by" can cause the crankcase to become pressurized, forcing normal oil vapors out of the engine's breather. This in turn will cause the engine to consume excessive amounts of oil. Preventing "blow-bys" with properly broken in piston rings will therefore keep your engine running cleaner and cooler.

In addition, piston rings also manage the amount of oil present on the cylinder walls for lubrication. If the rings do not seat properly, excessive amounts of oil accumulate on the cylinder wall surfaces and this oil gets burned each time the cylinder fires. And that means, you consume more oil.

Overall, proper engine break in will have a major impact on how strongly your engine will perform, how much oil it will consume and how long it will last.

Most experts agree that the best way to properly break in your engine is to keep the engine rpm below 3,000 and to vary the engine speed. That means, don't drive at one constant speed for a long time—whether fast or slow—for the first 800 km. You should also avoid hard stops for the first 325 km or so for the sake of your new brake linings.

Of EWDs and air pollution

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

HERE'S one glass to a reader. He said we ban cigarette smoking in many places but how about one vehicle on the street that belches smoke with impunity?

One smoke-belching public utility bus spews smoke the equivalent of 1,000 lighted cigarettes for maybe every one minute that it negotiates Edsa.

Either daytime or nighttime, you will see smoke-belching buses, rendering emission tests checkpoints inutile. It's worst at night: buses emitting killer fumes ply Edsa indiscriminately—when law enforcers are off-duty.

So, who needs the Clean Air Act?

Again, what we have here is a law that has no teeth. We've always been good at enacting laws—but very bad in enforcing them.

* * *

Look, because of the Clean Air Act, even a brand-new vehicle needs to pass the vehicle emission test before it gets clearance for registration.

Is there any crazier government law than that?

This country has lost all its logic.

Since when is a brand-new vehicle supposed to emit poisonous fumes indiscriminately?

My neighbor burns dry leaves almost every morning and I will never get relief from authorities if I report my neighbor for polluting the air I breathe.

So again, who needs the Clean Air Act?

* * *

OK, here's another law that's been there for ages but is suddenly revived for reasons that are obvious.

Starting January 2003, all motor vehicles must be equipped with an Early Warning Device (EWD) before they can be registered, the Land Transportation Office has announced.

The LTO said the move was prompted by public clamor, citing many serious and fatal accidents because motorists do not have an EWD installed either in front or rear of their stalled vehicles when trouble has struck.

* * *

Not to brag but I have never removed the EWD from the car trunk. It's a bit rusty now but a little oil will easily restore its old luster.

The gadget really helps in preventing accidents, especially at night when visibility is poor or almost zero, or when it's raining.

I wonder why its mandatory use has been put aside.

* * *

The EWD requirement for motor vehicles took effect in the mid-'70s with the implementation of Letter of Instructions 229 signed by the late President Marcos.

Among others, LOI 229 requires that all owners of motor vehicles shall have at all times a pair of early warning device consisting of a "triangular, collapsible reflectorized material in red and yellow color, visible from 400 meters."

Whenever any motor vehicle is stalled or parked for 30 minutes or more on any street or highway, including expressways, the EWD shall be installed at least four meters away to the front and rear of the motor vehicle.

* * *

I wonder why this policy was suddenly scrapped. Or was it totally overlooked? It's been there since December 1976. But by some quirk twist of fate, its implementation died a natural death.

Lack of political will on the part of previous LTO officials?

Your guess is as good as mine.

* * *

I gathered that it became common practice that EWDs were being rented out to motorists who do not have the device when they register their vehicles. Such a practice was tolerated or even encouraged, resulting in the emergence of "backyard industries," such as the manufacture of EWDs, with LTO personnel involved in the racket.

I was told that some LTO clerks were bribed during registration to overlook the EWD requirement.

I welcome the EWD's revival. To ensure that no fake EWDs are presented when registering the vehicle, the EWD should contain the legal documents to back the owner's rightful claim to the gadget.

* * *

I congratulate the people behind the successful launch of the Yokohama's new tire line—the AVS ES 100. The occasion, held at the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang on Nov. 9, saw the presence of top car racers like Jody Coseteng, Jojo Silverio, Pepon Marave and George and Kokie Ramirez.

I likewise salute Silverwind Alloy Castings for providing the rims and of course Honda Cars Philippines for supplying the four test cars for the occasion.

The new product has reduced road noise to 1.9 decibels in the frequency range of 250 Hz., while likewise boasting of the innovative tread called the Silica Compound Technology.

Mabuhay kayo!

* * *

QUOTE ME. Make it a habit checking your tire pressure once a month.

Just wondering. . .

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. will launch the all-new 2003 Honda City in Manila. Launched in Bangkok one week ago, the new City is supremely more stylish than the outgoing model being sold here.

The 2003 City comes equipped with unusual features for a small entry-level car, such as a continuously variable automatic transmission with steering-wheel mounted plus and minus buttons for seven-speed manual shifting, ABS brakes with EBD (electronic brakeforce distribution) and BA (brake assist), rear seats with a 60:40 split configuration that can be folded separately or fully folded to increase cargo space, a 500-liter trunk that is as capacious as a full-sized passenger car's, and a brand-new 1.5-liter i-DSI (intelligent dual and sequential ignition) powerplant offering improved torque, fuel economy and LEV (Low Emission Vehicle)-class emission levels Built on the same global small-car platform as Honda's Fit in Japan and the Jazz in Europe, the new City is priced only a wee bit higher than its predecessor.

...If and when Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. will bring over the snazzy all-new Colt subcompact passenger car to replace the long-overdue-for-retirement Lancer it is selling here. The new Colt, launched in Tokyo last Nov. 11, is based on the same platform as DaimlerChrysler's Smart car and will be sold (in Japan) with 24-hour roadside assistance for the first three years of ownership. Without extra cost or time lag, buyers in Japan can build their Colt to their own liking by choosing from options in 33 categories, including engine size, wheel type and seat shape. Hundreds of millions of different build-to-order combinations can be crafted.

...Why, among the herds of Toyota Kijangs and aging Kia Sephia cars (a.k.a. the Timor), I saw quite a few latest-model Honda Stream and Honda Odyssey minivans and Lexus RX 300 sport utes on the streets of Jakarta. These are vehicles you don't see on the streets of Metro Manila because they are not available here.

...Why the new Toyota Hi-Lux pickup is already being sold in Kuala Lumpur while Metro Manilans are still being sold the old model.

...Why the Nissan X-Trail SUV is seen on the streets of Bangkok while we are still in the dark as to when in 2003 it will be launched here. If the X-Trail won't be brought here as announced when Nissan Motor Co. top honcho Carlos Ghosn visited Manila earlier this year, can't the new Terrano (also glimpsed in Bangkok) at least be made available to give SUV buyers an alternative to the massive Nissan Patrol?

...Why the Ford Escape is advertised in Bangkok as powered by a V6 engine while over here the 6-cylinder option is not offered by Ford Group Philippines.

Face it

Face it, people. When it comes to new cars, as in many other aspects of industrial development, our country is lagging behind Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. But you can't blame the auto manufacturers for giving priority to our Southeast Asian neighbors. Each one represents a more profitable market than the Philippines.

Thailand, which has recovered from the 1997 Asian financial crisis, is the region's biggest car and light truck market well as Asia's automotive production center. Despite the heavy taxes imposed by Kuala Lumpur on cars of foreign make or origin, Malaysia's econom ic prosperity and high wage rates make it an attractive market for carmakers while Indonesia is seen as a promising market because of its large population (around 210 million) and oil riches.

Besides, unlike us, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia ensure a level playing field for motor vehicle manufacturers by not allowing used cars and trucks to be dumped in their countries. In the process, the governments of these Asean countries don't expose their own people to the safety and health hazards of junked, smoke-belching vehicles. Now, like me, are you still just wondering?

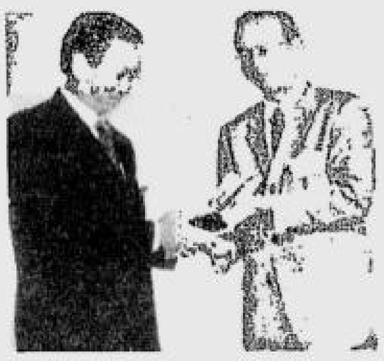
***

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: If you want breakfast in bed, sleep in the kitchen.

***

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.)

Universal Motors honored with award from Nissan



UMC president Richard L. Lee receives the EVP Award from Norio Matsumura, executive vice president, Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., Japan.

UNIVERSAL Motors Corp. (UMC), assembler and distributor of Nissan light commercial vehicles and SUVs in the Philippines, was awarded the inaugural Executive Vice President Award from Nissan.

Honored for its record-breaking sales performance, Univeral Motors is the only distributor in Asia, from among over 100 members of the Nissan Global Network, to be awarded this distinction. The only other countries honored were Canada, Italy, Brazil, Algeria and the United States (Hawaii).

Universal Motors' strong presence in the Philippine market highlights the significant contribution to Nissan's global objectives. The Nissan Frontier has enjoyed the No. 1 position in the pickup segment for two consecutive years and continues to be No. 1 in 2002 with a combined 4x2 and 4x4 year-to-date sales of 1,749 units or 32.9 percent market share. The Urvan models have so far registered a 16 percent growth over last year and occupies a strong No. 2 position among all vans. Universal Motors' prestige model, the Nissan Patrol, remains the premium choice among the elite buyers of full wagons.

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2002 525iA Limo, blue on black leather, 400km
2002 325iA, silver on black leather, 2Tkm
2002 318i M Sport, black on black leather, 8Tkm
2002 X5 3.0d, blue on black leather, 9Tkm
2002 318iA Exec, silver on black leather, 1400km
2002 318iA Limo, silver on gray fabric, 1Tkm
2001 325iA, green on black leather, 1600km
2001 316iA Limo, white on black fabric, 1Tkm
2001 318iA Limo, blue on black fabric, 3Tkm
1999 520iA, white on black fabric, 29Tkm
1996 523iA, silver on black leather, 13Tkm
1996 320iA, silver on black leather, 40Tkm
2001 318iA, white on black leather, 11Tkm
2002 318iA Exec, silver on black, 6Tkm

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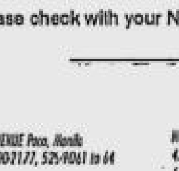

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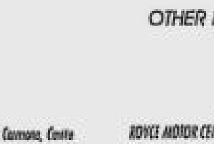

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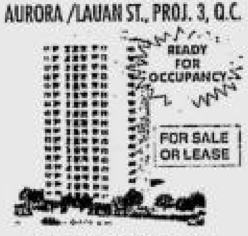

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QUEZON CITY

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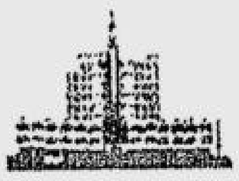

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Ofc Staff/HRD START ASAP w/hi salary 7812681 Ms Mary

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late KHO JO CHUA has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 37, Page No. 9, Book No. 24 Series of 2002 before Notary Public Elena Milita L. Chica of Manila (PDI - November 21, 28 & December 5, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JAIME S. DE GUZMAN have been extrajudicially settled per Doc. No 100, Page No. 20, Book No. IV, Series of 2002 before ATTY. JOSE T. GARNACE, Notary Public of Makati City (PDI-Nov. 21, 28 & Dec. 5, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE OF LOSS
Notice is hereby given that BOI Certificate of Registration No. EP 93-131 under the name of ILYN INDUSTRIES was lost.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late NIEVES R. DESUASIDO was extra-judicially settled partially among her heirs as per Doc. No. I, Page No. I, Book No. I, Series of 2002 under Roy R. Rebanal of Oas, Albay, Notary Public.
(PDI-Nov. 14, 21 & 28, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice of Loss of Meralco Stock Certificate Nos. 125226 - 400 shares; 279559 - 200 shares; 392409 - 180 shares and 491551 - 234 shares under the name of Equiliworld Securities, Inc. GSIS for the account of RONALD M COSALAN. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
PDI-Nov 28, Dec 5 & 12, 2002

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The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS) is inviting bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and installation of nine (9) units microfilm viewer/printer in the following SSS Offices:

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Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P3,118,500.00
Source of Funding : Capital Expenditures
Delivery Period Thirty (30) calendar days

Interested bidders must secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Only eligible bidders will be provided with the Request for Proposals (RFP) after payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00. For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 and 920-6401 local 5490/5491. The deadline for the submission of eligibility documents is on 12 December 2002.

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) MIGUEL E. ROCA, JR.
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OBITUARIES

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Leticia R. Jose

Joined our Creator on November 26, 2002
at the age of 70.

Her loving husband **Plaridel**(†); children **Marilette "Jinggay", Fio "Bombito"** and **Ace**; grandchildren **Jazz, Lizzy, Orielle** and other relatives request the pious readers to please pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel 4, Magallanes Church, St. Alphonsus de Liguori Chapel.

Interment will be on November 30, 2002, 10:00 a.m. at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

Psalm 91 "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust."

VIRGIL BANIQUET BERNARDINO

Who passed away on November 26, 2002

His wife, **Violeta**; children **Viviane, Vincent** & **Joanna**, and **Vanessa**; grandchildren **Franco** and **Enzo**; brothers and sisters **Vitaliano Jr.** & **Nanette, Violeta** & **Conrado Caridad, Voltaire** & **Tessie, Vivien**, and **Victor** & **Lory**; relatives and friends mourn his passing and request prayers for his eternal rest.

His body lies in state at Parish of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Bulletin Street, West Triangle, Quezon City.

Final Mass will be on Friday, November 29, 2002, 8:30 a.m. at the Parish of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

"Go and find the sun that will fill you with warmth and happiness and you will see the days unfolding around you are the good days, the days of pleasure and dance, the days when you can breath more clearly because you are alive, because you are alive, living days that mean something to you. Embrace yourself, embrace all whom you love and believe in possibility..."

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KALAW — **528-0213, 527-3342**
MEGAMALL — **635-0219, 635-0220**

> "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him."
> I Corinthians 2:9

Jovita Fuertes Tan

June 30, 1931 – November 24, 2002
Peacefully joined her Creator at the age of 71.

Her bereaved children **Jojo & Albert Mirani, Dodo & Shirley Tan, Dodi & Doji**; her grandchildren **Dada, Justin, Doy-doy, Binky, Kyla, Gigi**; relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence, 69 Chestnut Drive, Ecoland, Phase 7, Davao City.

Interment will be at Davao Memorial Park, Phase II, Matina, Davao City on Saturday, November 30, 2002 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery Church, Bajada, Davao City.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES
OF
VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.
wish to announce with deepest regret the death of

DON JOSE MARIA OSSORIO

CHAIRMAN EMERITUS
on 21 October 2002

and his wife

CLAIRE OSSORIO

on 12 November 2002

We request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of their souls.

You may send your condolences to:

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PROCUREMENT SERVICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Procurement Service (PS) invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the various IT Equipment with Local Area Network requirements of **DSWD-Central Office and Region IV**.

The approved budget for the contract is **P2,500,000.00** per region/office.

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, R.R. Road, Cristobal Street, Paco, Manila on December 12, 2002, Tuesday at 9:30 A.M. for the DSWD-Region IV Requirements and at 1:30 P.M., for the DSWD-Central Office Requirements.**

The bid documents shall be available at the PS-Purchasing Division starting **November 28, 2002** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00) per Bid Document.**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above-mentioned address.

Bidders are required to submit ISO 9001 or ISO 9002 certification from manufacturing facility.

Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **December 26, 2002, Thursday at 9:30 A.M.**

For more information, please call the PS-Purchasing Division at telephone Nos. (02) 563-9374 or 563-9402.

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the Eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPÍDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI-Nov. 28 & Dec. 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT IV
DR. JOSE N. RODRIGUEZ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Tala, Caloocan City

November 20, 2002

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose N Rodriguez Memorial Hospital invites responsible and duly accredited suppliers from DOH/RHO 4 to pre-qualify and bid for the supply of the following items:

A. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Repair of Hospital Building)
B. FOODSTUFFS
C. DRUGS/MEDICINES
D. MEDICAL SUPPLIES
E. LABORATORY SUPPLIES
F. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

A. DRUGS/MEDICINES	9:00 A.M.
B. MEDICAL SUPPLIES	10:00 A.M.
C. LABORATORY SUPPLIES	11:00 A.M.
D. FOODSTUFFS	1:00 P.M.
E. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (REPAIR)	2:00 P.M.
F. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)	3:00 P.M.

Issuance of Bid Documents: December 02 to December 12, 2002
8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Submission And Opening of Bids:

A. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (REPAIR)	December 13, 2002	9:00 A.M.
B. FOODSTUFFS	December 13, 2002	1:00 P.M.
C. DRUGS/MEDICINES	December 16, 2002	9:00 A.M.
D. MEDICAL SUPPLIES	December 16, 2002	1:00 P.M.
E. LABORATORY SUPPLIES	December 17, 2002	9:00 A.M.
F CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)	December 17, 2002	1:00 P.M.

The approved budget for each item (A to F) appears on the Bid/Tender Documents.

Prospective bidders may secure bid proposal forms from the BAC Secretary, Property and Supply Section, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P300.00.

All activities shall be held at the Training Room, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, Tala, Caloocan City, unless announced otherwise.

Bidders who failed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on December 05, 2002 are not allowed to attend the Bidding on December 13, 16 and 17, 2002.

Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in the form of certified check, manager's check, or GSIS Bond in the sum of 2.5% of the total bid.

For particulars, interested bidders may contact the BAC Secretary or call telephone no. 962-0884.

(Sgd.) CECILIA A. GARGUENA, M.D.
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI -- November 21 & 28, 2002)

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NOTICE OF DEFERMENT OF BIDDING

The **Manila Gas Corporation (MGC)** announces the deferment from **November 29, 2002** to **December 11, 2002** of the submission of bids for the sale MGC's Real Estate Property located in Paco, Manila.

Submission of bids is on December 11, 2002 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

(PDI--Nov. 28, 2002)

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Lower growth seen due to weaker farm output

WEAKER agricultural output likely dragged on the country's economic growth in the third quarter, but steady exports and domestic demand should help the country achieve its target this year, analysts said.

The government is due to release the data today.

A Reuters poll of 10 economists yielded an average forecast of 4 percent year-on-year growth in the third quarter, down from 4.5 percent in the second quarter.

The government's economic managers have also predicted an expansion of about 4 percent during July to September. In the same period of 2001, gross domestic product (GDP) grew 2.9 percent year-on-year.

"Manufacturing and services were the main drivers.

Agriculture is going to be down," said Luz Lorenzo, an economist at ATR-KIM Eng Securities.

Agriculture makes up about a fifth of total output and industry about 30 percent, including assembly of electronics items. Services are the biggest component at about 40 to 45 percent, with call centers becoming increasingly important.

Farm production in the three months to September grew just 0.12 percent year-on-year due to a contraction in corn and rice output. A six-month dry spell in the second and third quarters affected those crops and others.

David Cohen, an economist at S&P/MMS International, said third quarter growth would reflect the underlying uptrend in both exports and domestic demand.

"It appears to be a sustainable pace and, barring an unexpectedly severe deterioration in the global trade picture, the Philippines should be able to maintain their moderate growth," Cohen said.

Government officials have said strong domestic demand going into the Christmas season should help the economy expand by 4.4 percent year-on-year in the fourth quarter.

Pre-Christmas consumption is driven by around 8 million Filipinos working abroad who usually send billions of dollars a year home to family and friends, much of it before the holidays.

The government's official GDP growth target for this year is 4 percent after a 3.2-percent expansion in 2001. Exports are projected to grow 7.8 percent, a major turnaround from the 15.5 percent contraction last year.

Official estimates of GDP growth in 2003 were revised recently to 4.2 to 5.2 percent from 5 to 5.5 percent.

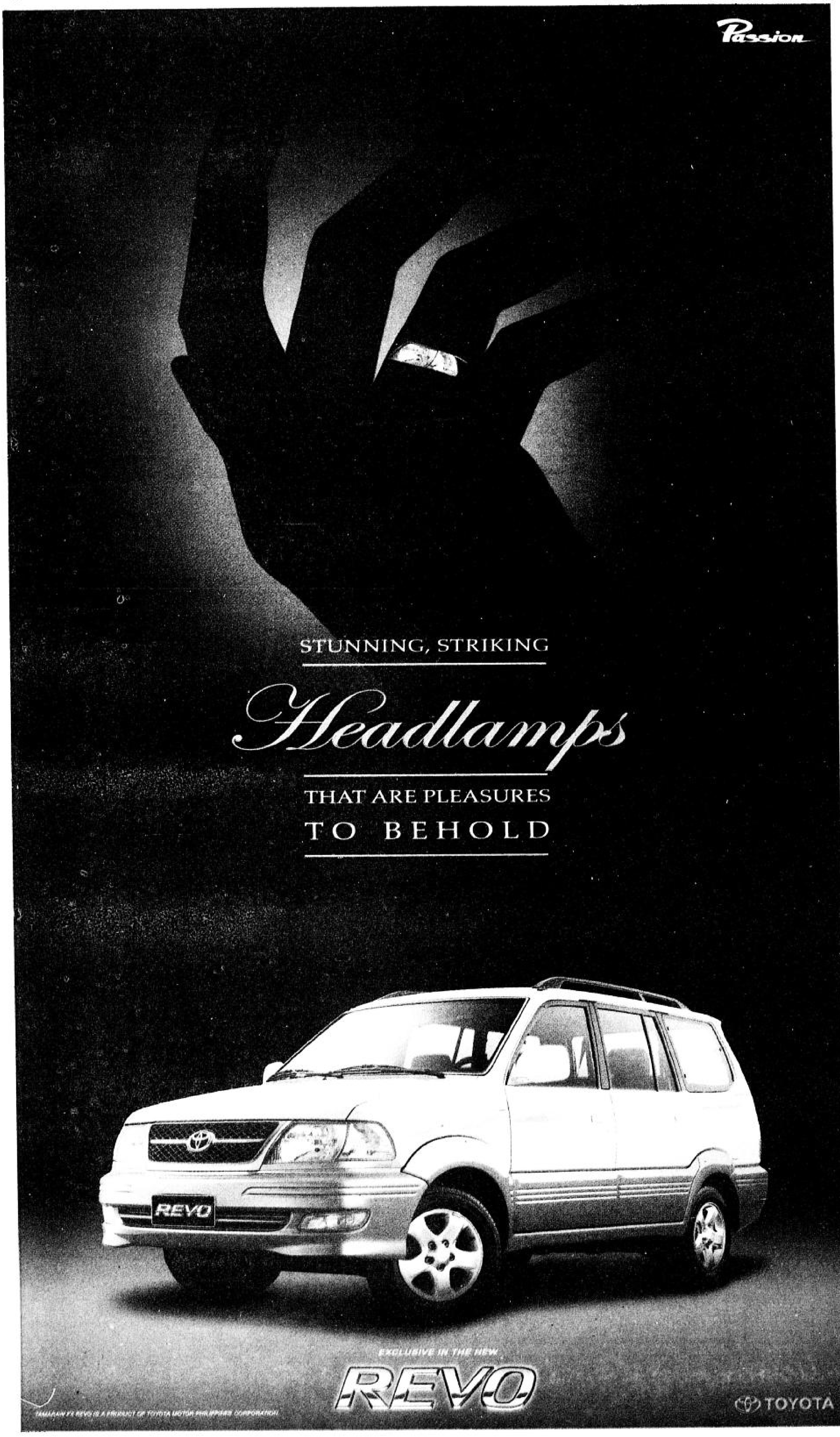
Economists were less optimistic about next year, as they expect a bulging budget deficit to constrain the government's ability to kick start the economy.

The fiscal shortfall grew to P187.6 billion, or about 4.7 percent of GDP, in the first 10 months—outstripping the 2002 target for the third time this year.

Some of the external risks include a possible US attack on Iraq and a slower economic recovery in the United States, the Philippines' main trading partner.

There is also concern that the El Niño weather phenomenon, which causes drought in the region, may affect farm output.

"We've put a big question mark on the pace of growth next year given the possible drag from agriculture sector and the lag effect of El Niño on the first couple of months, and a possible slowdown in manufacturing in the first half of next year," said Song Seng Wung, an economist at GK Goh Securities. *Reuters*



Cement sector pushes new standards

BAGUIO CITY—The cement industry is pushing for international standards that would introduce environmental controls on Philippine cement firms, a consultant of the mining industry said here.

Paul O'Callaghan, chief operating officer of Union Cement Corp. (UCC), told participants in the 49th annual national mine safety and environment conference last week that industry firms would soon apply the new environmental protocol called the "Cement Initiative."

The protocol will expect domestic cement firms to set climate protection standards by 2007, including mechanisms to control carbon dioxide emissions from cement factories, O'Callaghan said during the conference's plenary session.

Holcim, UCC's mother company, plans to reduce overall carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent in 2010.

The protocol was developed from a study that was supported by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), and was implemented by Holcim last year, Callaghan said.

The WBCSD replaced the United Nations Center on Transnational Corporations and had supported the Global Mining Initiative (GMI) led by international firms Rio Tinto, Placer Dome, Western Mining Corp., Anglo-American, BHP Billiton, Newmont, Phelps Dodge, Noranda and Corelco.

Jose Ernesto Rodriguez, president of the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA), said the cement industry remains a sturdy sector of the dormant mine trade, which is striving to overcome low world metals prices and a Supreme Court case that questioned the constitutionality of the 1995 Philippine Mining Act.

O'Callaghan said the Cement Initiative banks on a "triple bottom line" for UCC: host community equity, environmental stewardship and economic efficiency. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Plastics group softens stance on tariff cuts

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE Plastic Industry Association has reportedly softened its stand against the government's plan to defer the reduction of duties on resins or polymers next year.

PPIA is composed of companies making finished plastic products that use as inputs polymers such as polyethylene and polypropylene produced by local petrochemical companies.

A government source said PPIA officials told the Department of Trade and Industry that if the government was bent on invoking its right to defer the tariff cuts on resins under the Asean Free Trade Agreement (where all goods traded within the region would have duties of no more than 5 percent by next year), duties on finished local products should at least be adjusted to a level at par with the polymers.

The source said this was meant to address the tariff distortion in the industry where some finished plastic products were slapped lower duties of 5 percent while the resins were charged 15 percent.

The government has agreed to give the petrochemical industry more breathing space by extending the tariff protection on polymers on condition that a naphtha cracker was to be in place to complete the industry's integration.

The PPIA had been previously pressing the government to push through with the scheduled reduction in duties on resins from 15 percent to 5 percent under Afta to finally correct the distortion in the tariff structure.

The debate on petrochemical tariffs has become a hotly contested issue that the Committee on Tariff and Related Matters was forced to defer its action on the case last Friday pending Malacañang's efforts to reach a compromise between petrochemical firms and finished plastic products.

The makers of finished plastic products met with the President Tuesday afternoon to make a presentation on their position on the tariff reforms in the industry.

For feedback, text us at (0919)880-33-54 or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MINESTRA di Funghi and Farro and Insalata di Verdura alla Griglia

Menu-hopping with Margarita Forés

Text by Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Mike Alquinto

FOOD maverick and Cibo owner Margarita Forés says her clients like to stick to their food comfort zones.

"People develop their own favorites, and they don't even bother to read the menu anymore. *Sayang*, because there are a lot of choices on the menu that go undiscovered," she says.

We couldn't agree more. Before, every time we were at Cibo, we would hanker for the rich and creamy summer squash soup, plus a light and healthy bruschette pomodoro. We would wash everything down with a cool limonata drink.

However, over lunch one day at the newest Cibo in the Power Plant, her sixth outlet, Fores took us on a gastronomic adventure and introduced us to the hidden treasures waiting to be discovered in the new menu.

First, she made us try the Frullato Di Uva Rosa, a very refreshing and healthy shake made from red grape. It's all-natural, with the pits and peel included, which, in fact, are the most nutritious parts of the grape. Then, to whet our appetites, we began with a Pate di Fegato Dip (chicken liver paté with fruits), which was creamy and has now become my personal favorite, even upstaging my usually favored bruschetta.

Fores said the dips at Cibo are always bestsellers. She expressed pride that a lot of children come to Cibo just to order the spinach dip.

"I really love it," she laughed. "And the parents don't mind. At least the kids get their vegetable requirements."

Deadly dishes

After the dip, we sampled the Crespelle Al Forno ala Melanzane, baked crepes with an eggplant, stewed tomatoes, basil and mozzarella filling, a vegan's delight. The "deadlier" version was the Ala Funghi Trifolato, consisting of crepes loaded with ham, mushroom and bechamel.

For the weight-conscious, Forés suggested the Insalata di Verdura alla Griglia (grilled vegetable salad with red pesto) or the Insalata Nizzarda, a grand salad with tuna, olives, tomatoes in wine vinaigrette, a meal in itself. Salads, she said, have grown

MENU-HOPPING/ C2

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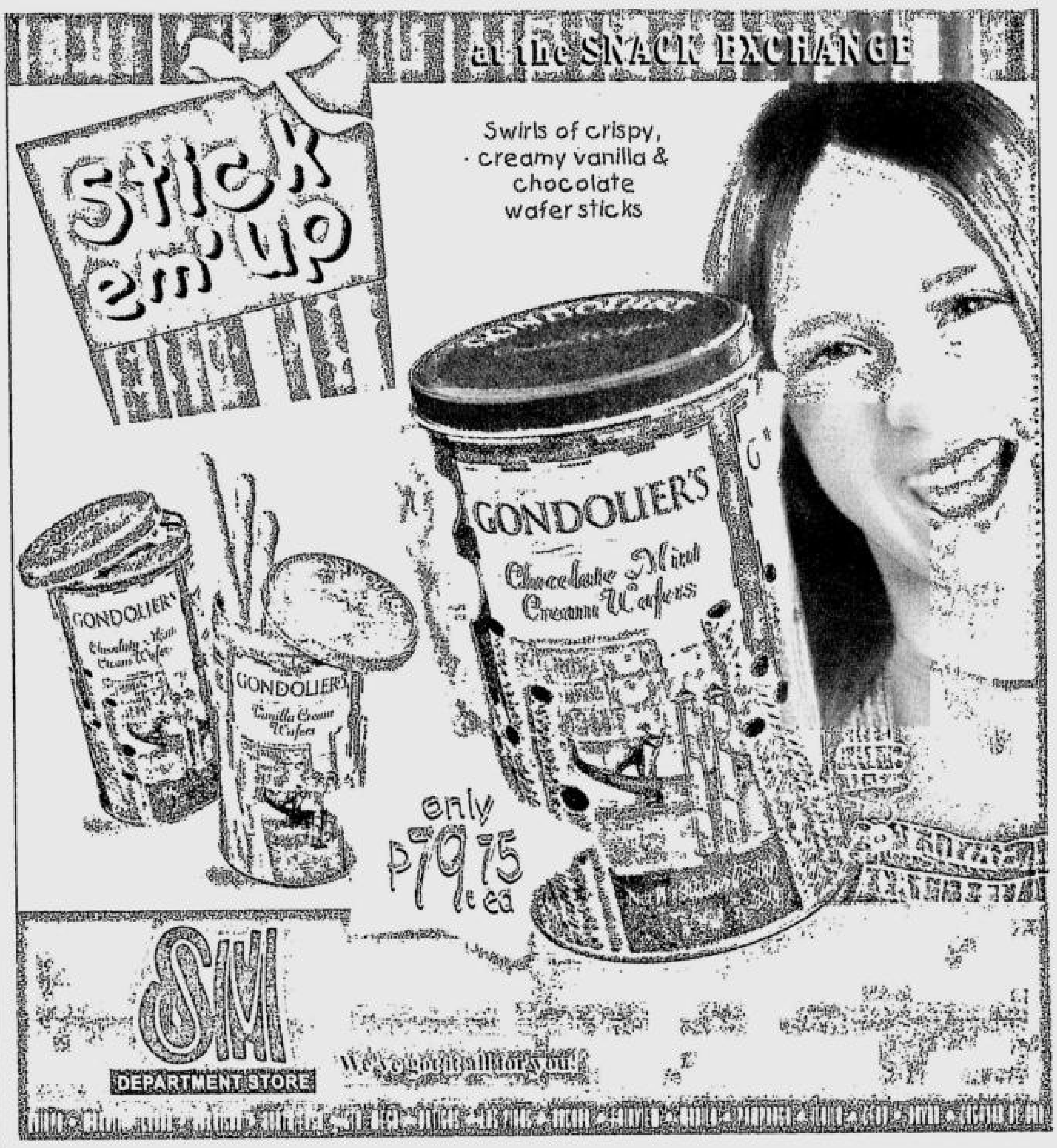
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MS. AVELINA CARBUNGCO FLORENDO introduced cake decorating technique in the Philippines the WILTON WAY, the AUSTRALIAN way of making gumpaste flowers with very fine strings and lace on fondant, the ENGLISH way or LAMBETH WORK of overpiped scrolls and strings of very tiny flowers, the SWISS CHOCOLATE TECHNIQUE and GUMPASTE DOLL course. She and her son Jun, introduced the latest technique which they learned in Telford, York & London, British Sugar craft and The International Cake Exploration Societe, August 24-28, 2002 at Nashville, Tennessee, U. S. A.

1) Dec. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 / 8:30 am - 5 pm - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING - P7,500. Learn the practical & easy method of making song flowers, borders, scrolls & strings, cake designing, sugar molding, color flow, color technique, wedding cake assembly. Jan. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 2003 - P8,500
2) Dec. 7 - NEW CAKES, PASTRIES AND COOKIES - P2,500. Cooked Carrot Cake, Banana Cake, Peanut Butter Cookies, Coconut Cookies, Choco-Chip Cookies, Chocolate Nut Cookies, Hopia, Siopao. Jan. 4, 2003 - P3,000
3) Dec. 9, 10, 11, 12 / 8:30 am - 5pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD CAKE DECORATING - P7,500. New method of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilting, swags & ribbons, ribbon insertion, finest string works, lace pieces, fondant, chocolate fondant. P8,000
4) Dec. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 / 8 am - 5 pm - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P9,500. 30 recipes of the basic cakes, breads, pies, pastries and cookies. Jan. 20, 21, 22, 23, 2003
5) Dec. 14 - LEARN SUGAR-FREE CAKES AND BREADS - P4,000. Banana Cake, Apple Almond Cake, Chocolate Walnut Cookies, Carrot Cake, All Wheat Bread & Raisin Bread. Jan. 18, 2003
6) Dec. 16, 17, 18, 19 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH RECIPE - P3,500 each. 1) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-Waling 2) Rose, Catleya, Cymbidium 3) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies. 4) Open Rose, Hydrangea, Grapes. - (Each set are lessons covered for one day.)
7) Dec. 9, 10, 11, 12 - SPECIAL BAKING - P10,500. Learn to make 30 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has different icing and decoration. Jan. 27 - 31, 2003
8) Dec. 18 / 8am - 5pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT USING LACE MATS, NEW ROLLING PIN, SWAGS & RIBBONS - P3,000. Next schedule: Jan. 22, 2003
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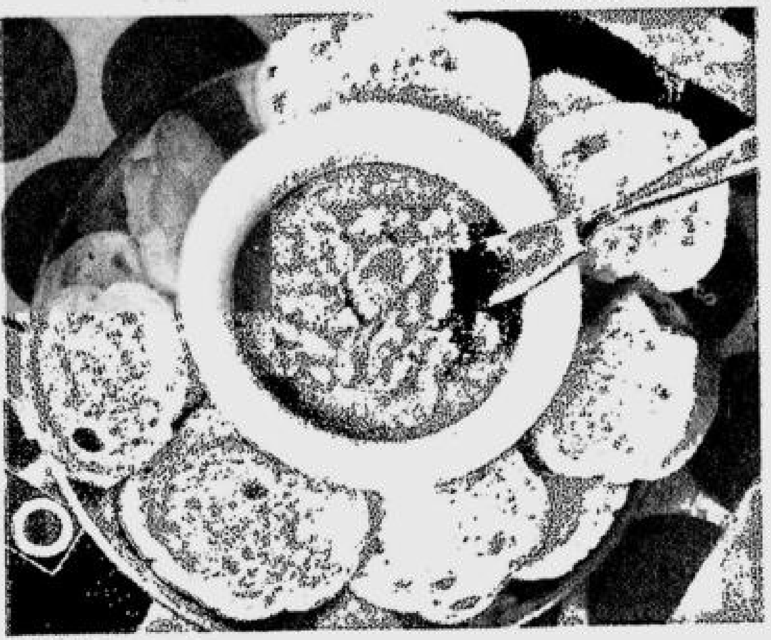
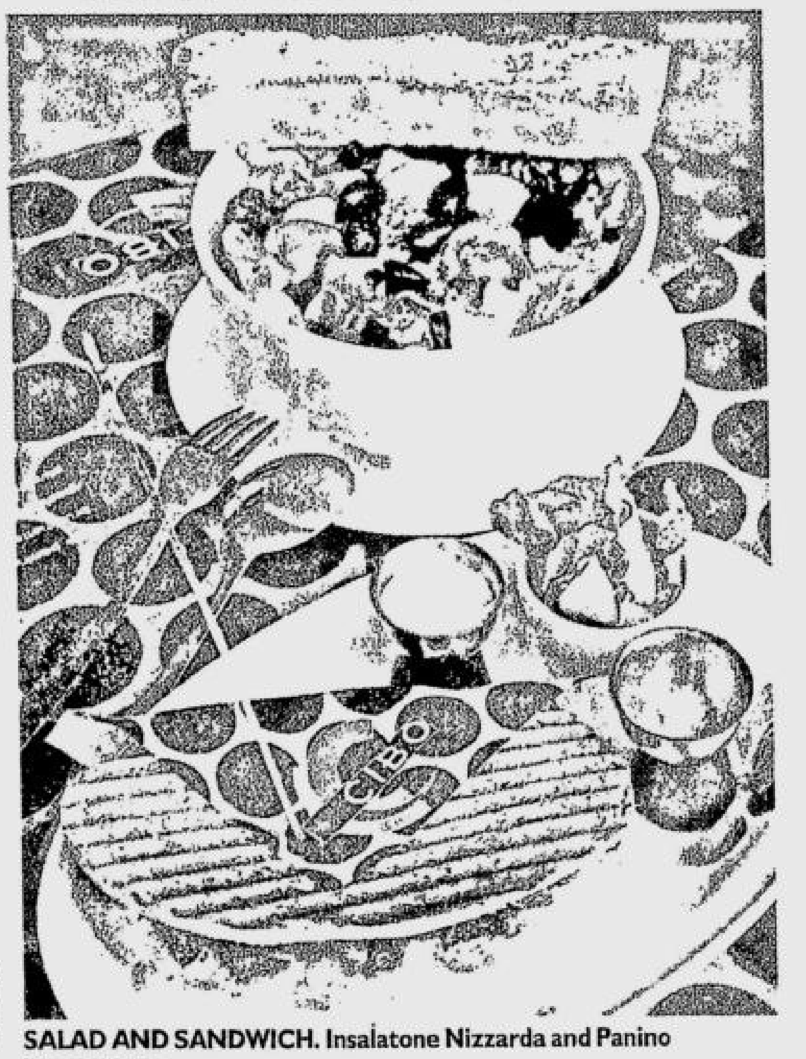


PATÉ di Fegato dip

PENNE alla Fiorentina

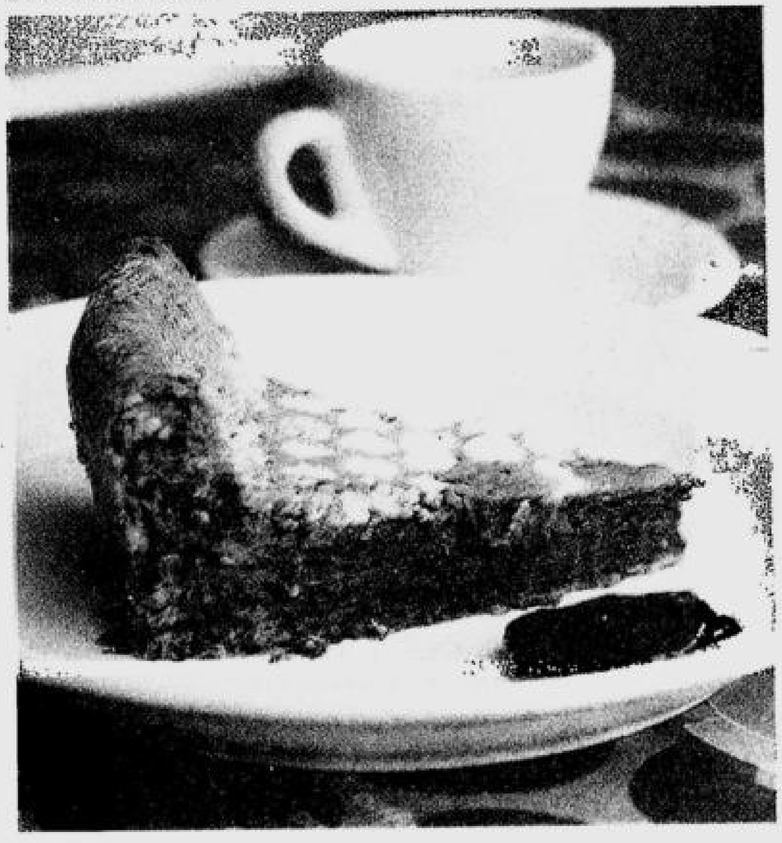


SALAD AND SANDWICH. Insalatone Nizzarda and Panino Mascarpone

RED AND GREEN. Uva Rosa and Uva Bianca Frullato

Menu-hopping with Margarita Forés

The celebrated restaurateur-chef takes us on a magical gastronomic tour of her recently opened Cibo branch in the Power Plant



TORTA Di Ciocco-Matto

MARGARITA Forés

From page C1

in popularity in all her six outlets.

Salads and appetizers done, we had some warm soup next. The Minestra di Funghi and Farro (mushroom and barley soup), compared with the squash soup that we loved, was lighter and healthier, but equally tasty. Those who love soup and sandwich may pair that off with the Panino Mascarpone, a sandwich made of Parma ham and dried figs on Tuscan bread with mascarpone. Pasta-philes, on the other hand, should try the interesting Penne alla Fiorentina, which is penne with cream, Italian sausage, fennel, vodka and *cambozola* cheese or the Penne Il Selvaggio with liver paté, cream pancetta and sage.

However, it's not all pasta, panini and salads at Cibo. Yes, there is rice at Cibo, too. Rice lovers will enjoy the Pilaf di Riso with funghi trifolati, which is rice with sautéed mushrooms. The best complement to that is the Tagliati Di Maiale, thinly sliced roast porkloin with garlic and rosemary sauce. Forés said that this dish is ideal for health-conscious people. "It's white meat so it's healthy, plus we slice it very thinly," she said.

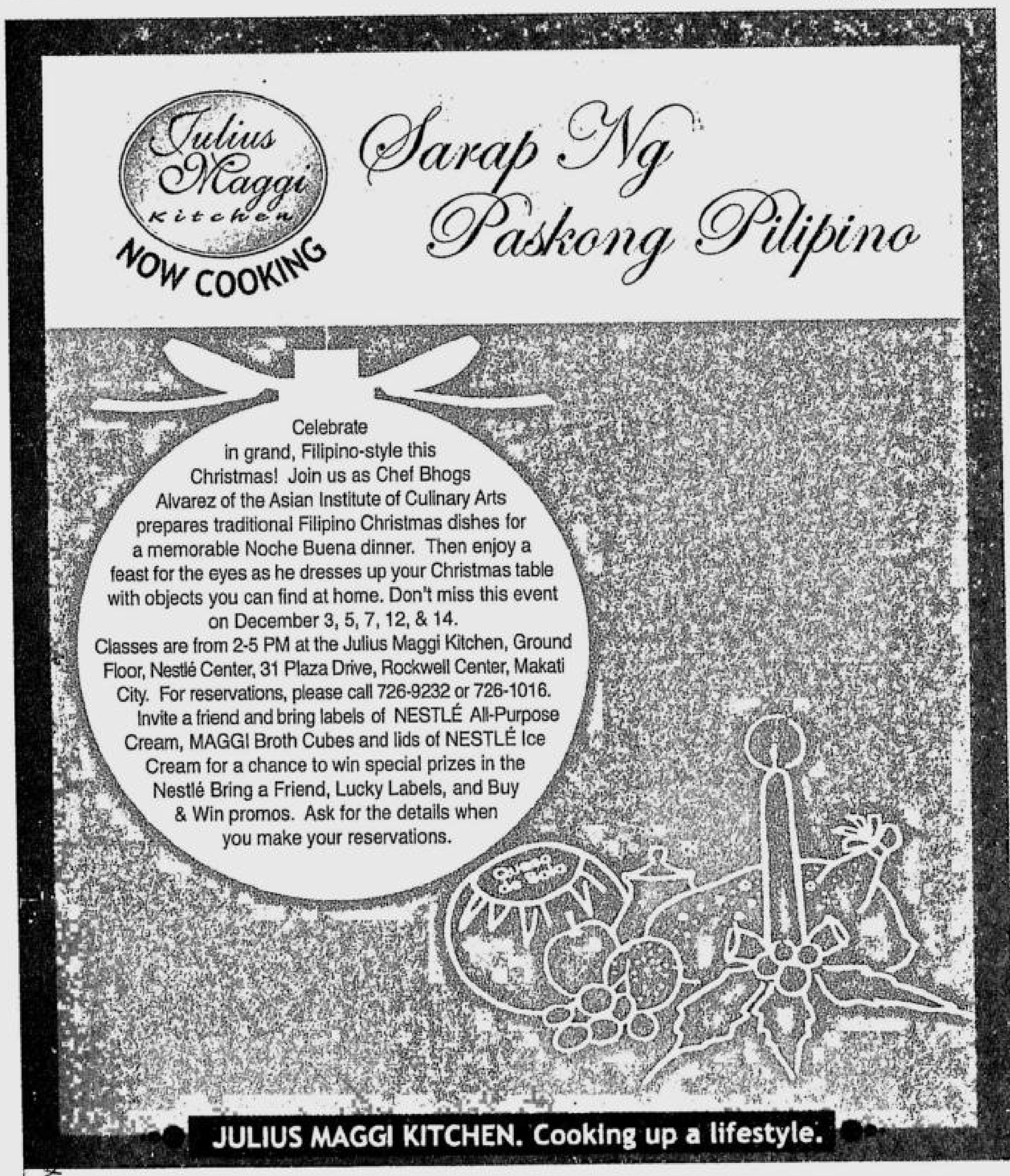
After making all those light and healthy selections, you can set aside your dietary restrictions and "sin" momentarily because meals at Cibo are not complete without the desserts. In fact, the place is very famous for its desserts.

That afternoon, we had the Torta Di Ciocco-Matto, a nutty chocolate cake with raspberry preserve on the side. At the end of the meal, we calmed our tummies that were groaning with satisfaction by sipping a Canarino, a digestive with a lemon peel.

Yes, stepping out of one's food comfort zone may yield many undiscovered pleasures.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

HEALTHY. Sliced Roast Porkloin with Pilaf di Riso Funghi



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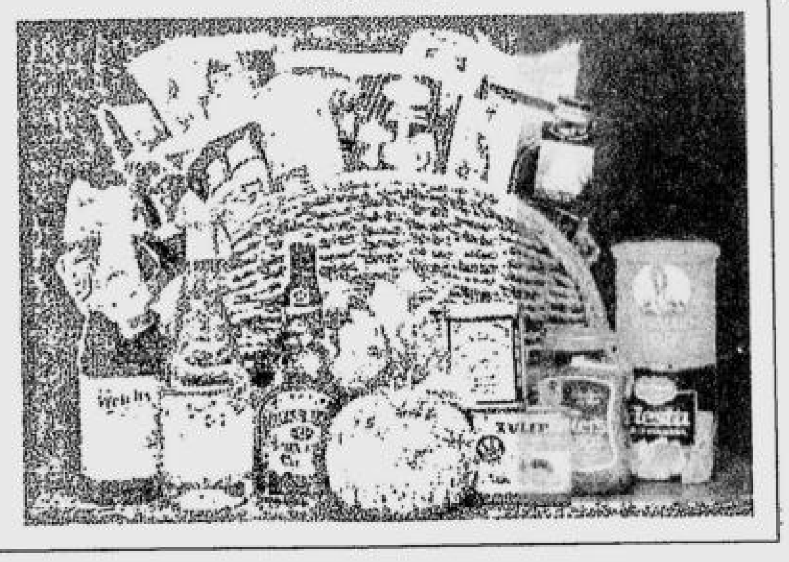

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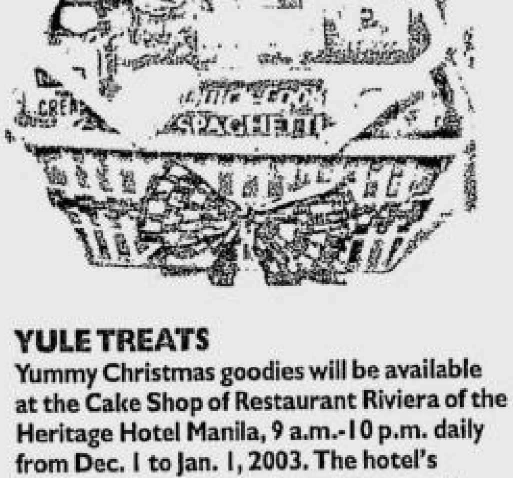
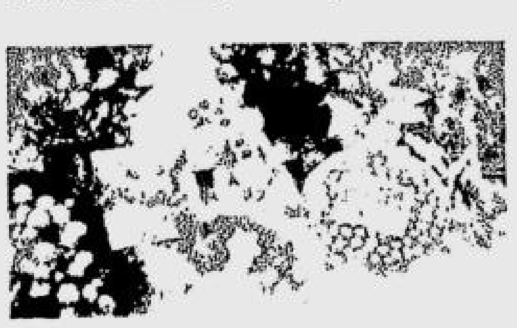
Call 810-7501 local 4361; fax 848-0326 or e-mail foodservice@delmontephil.com.





YULE TREATS
Yummy Christmas goodies will be available at the Cake Shop of Restaurant Riviera of the Heritage Hotel Manila, 9 a.m.-10 p.m. daily from Dec. 1 to Jan. 1, 2003. The hotel's signature hits—Ginger Bread House and Hazelnut Honey Cake—are perfect for gifts or Noche Buena dessert. Call 854-8888 local 7355.

Feast on delectable Chinese specialties

DINING OUT

SOFAH Restaurant offers Chinese specialties with a wide array of 100 plus items on the menu, which consists of favorites from the Mainland, Taiwanese and Cantonese schools of cooking. It has desserts, which are European in origin, like the Tiramisu or Panna-Cotta. Sofah is located at 571 Gen. Malvar and Jorge Bocobo Streets, Malate and is open Monday-Saturday, 11:30 a.m.-3 a.m., Sunday, 11:30 a.m.-1 a.m. Call 523-2058 or 400-6572.

WESTIN Philippine Plaza offers French cuisine at the lunch and dinner buffet until Dec. 8. Dishes include Fromage (cheese), Charcuterie (a corner featuring prosciutto, pate, salami, sausages and the like) stations and live cooking stations for Bouillabaisse (fish soup) and luscious crepes. The distinctive Beaujolais Noveau Wine completes this grand fete and voile. Call 551-5555.

PAN-FRIED Supreme of Salmon with Fresh Tarragon Brioche Crumb Buttered Mange Tout, Dauphinoise Potatoes and Hollandaise Sauce

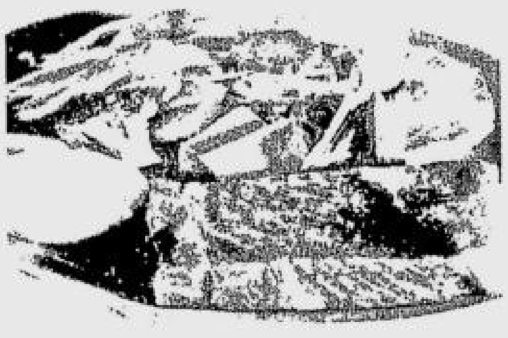
THE CENTURY Park Hotel celebrates Thanksgiving Day with a Filipino-themed buffet, with traditional American delights. From the Traditional Vermont Turkey, Barbecue Spareribs "Louisiana," Boston Baked Beans, Turkey Escalope Al Lemone to Pork Chops, Boneless Chicken, Beef Skewer and Assorted Sausages. Sample desserts like Apple Pie, Blueberry Cheese Cake, Pineapple Pie, Cherry Pie, Strawberry Pie and Lemon Pie. Call 528-5827/5829.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko Manila presents Vietnamese dishes. Healthy specialties include Ca Chu Nuong (charbroiled seabass fillet in banana leaf with chili paste), Tom Hap (steamed prawns with garlic sauce) and Ca Nuong (grilled salmon steak with spicy lime sauce). Call 867-3333 local 3354.

HYATT Regency Manila celebrates American "Thanksgiving Day" with a special buffet for lunch and dinner at Cafe Al Fresco today. The buffet includes Salmon and Asparagus Chowder with Sour Cream, Whole Baby Turkey with Orange Stuffing, Cranberry Chutney and Armagnac Sauce, Roasted Beef Brisket In Serrano Crust with Barbecue Sauce, Rosemary Prawns and Scallop Skewers with Tomato Salsa, Honey-roasted Pumpkin and Zucchini, Sweet Corn on the Cob and the Traditional Pumpkin Pie.

MAKATI Shangri-La's Inagiku Restaurant presents an all-you-can-eat a la carte lunch menu every Saturday, 12 nn-2:30 p.m. Diners can try Premium Sirloin, Chicken, Prawn and Vegetable Teppanyaki, Salmon, Kisu, Futo, Maguro, Lapu-lapu and California Maki. This a la carte lunch includes desserts like cakes, fresh fruits, ice cream and a free glass of soft drink or iced tea. Call 840-0884 or 813-8888 local 7588/7599.

OXTAIL in Pot at Sofah Restaurant



INAGIKU features an eat-all-you-can a la carte menu

VERMONT Turkey

Holiday Treat of CAUSEWAY TOURS

06-08 Dec. (Fri - Sun) 3D & 2N : GRAND ILOCOS TOURS
visit MANAOAG, VIGAN's Heritage Village, BATAC, SARRAT, PAOAY, LAOAG CITY, PAGUDPUD

06-08 Dec. (Fri - Sun) 3D & 2N : ECO-TOUR In BALER, Aurora Province
visit an Old Church, Surfing Site Beaches,huge Balete tree, Ermita Hill, Caunayan Falls, Stone Beach with rock formations.

13-16 Dec. (Thur - Sun) 4D & 3N : PALAWAN TOUR, choice of PUERTO PRINCESA or BUSUANGA ISLAND

20-23 Dec. (Fri - Mon) 4D & 3N : CAGAYAN VALLEY & ILOCOS REGION TOUR
visit Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela, Tuguegarao, Piat, Igug, Alcala,Lal-lo, Pagudpud, Burgos, Laoag City, Paoay, Batac and Vigan

27-30 Dec. (Fri - Mon) 4D & 3N : HIGHLAND ADVENTURE - Banaue, Bontoc, Sagada, Mt. Data & Baguio

For further details(Itenerary & other places to visit), please call CAUSEWAY TOURS
Telephone Nos. 851-72-94 ; 853-87-28 • Cellphone No. 0919-2838146

It's time to visit the fruitcake lady

FOR the past 28 years, many have been going to the private home of Ju.D Lao, maker of fruitcakes.

"Well, children love my fruitcakes because they do not have the strong rum taste. And adults love my fruitcakes because they are not too sweet," Ju.D said.

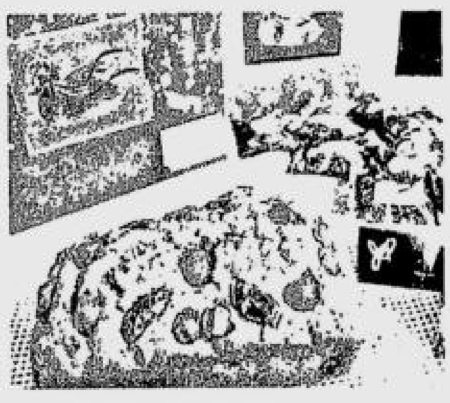
The Classic fruitcake is one of the favorites of Ju.D's clients. Ju.D Gold, a combination of the light and dark fruitcake, is a favorite in the business community because of its elegant gold packaging.

Ju.D Blue is a coffee-flavored fruitcake.

Chewy Chewkies are individually wrapped fruitcake cookies.

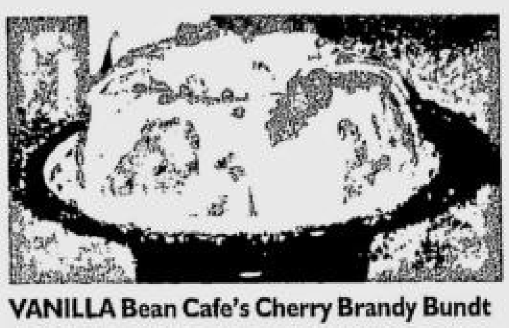
This Christmas, taste the best of the season and the best of fruitcakes.

Call 633-0260/1188 or (0917) 812-8812.



Sweet treats

THIS Christmas, treat your loved ones with Vanilla Bean Café's wide array of cakes and pastries, especially prepared by California Culinary Academy graduates Trina T. Imperial and Carissa Tiaoqui. The Tiaoqui sisters are the brains behind Vanilla Bean, a café, patisserie and caterer (for intimate groups) rolled into one. Vanilla Bean, originally located on A. Mabini in Malate, has been attracting the Makati crowd lately with its cakes and pastries, as well as lunch and snack entrees in its new outlet at the G/F, Adamson Center, L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village. As for its Christmas giveaways, a favorite is the Cherry Brandy Bundt Cake. Vanilla Bean Christmas Giveaways come in beautifully designed boxes or canisters (for the traditional and popular *lengua de gato*) and in symbolic Christmas colors. Place your orders three days in advance. Call 812-7974/5 (Makati) or 524-1193 (Manila).



VANILLA Bean Cafe's Cherry Brandy Bundt Cake

The first and only one of its kind in the Philippines.

Q: Ka Ernie, totoo ba talaga na makakakuha kami ng life insurance basta 50-80 years old kami?

A: Garantisado!
With LIFE your acceptance is guaranteed!
No medical exams. No health questions.
For as low as P725 a month!

PHILAM DIRECT
Life
Lifetime Insurance For Elders

GUARANTEED ACCEPTANCE

BASTA 50-80 YEARS OLD KA!
No health questions. No medical exams.

Acceptance for anyone 50-80 years old – GUARANTEED!
- No health questions asked.
- No medical exams.

Low fixed premium for the rest of your life – GUARANTEED!
- Premium as low as P725/month.
- Other plans available for higher cash benefits.

Cash insurance benefits that do not decrease with age – GUARANTEED!
- Your cash benefits are based on your enrollment age and you are covered for life, as long as you continue paying your premium.
- Benefit is up to three times the coverage in the event of accidental death.

Earn cash values – GUARANTEED!
- The cash values will keep increasing year after year.

Money back in 30 days – GUARANTEED!
- If within 30 days from the day we receive your signed application form and payment you change your mind about your LIFE policy, simply write us and we'll immediately return your money to you in full.

Get these cash benefits for as low as P725/month!
- Amount of Sum Insured for natural death including illnesses is based on Enrollment Age.
- Only death by accident is covered before the second anniversary of the policy.

Enrollment Age	50		55		60		65		70		75		80	
Coverage	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death
Sum Insured	P159,411	P637,644	P120,452	P481,808	P91,414	P365,656	P68,950	P172,375	P50,421	P126,053	P36,314	P90,785	P25,541	P63,853

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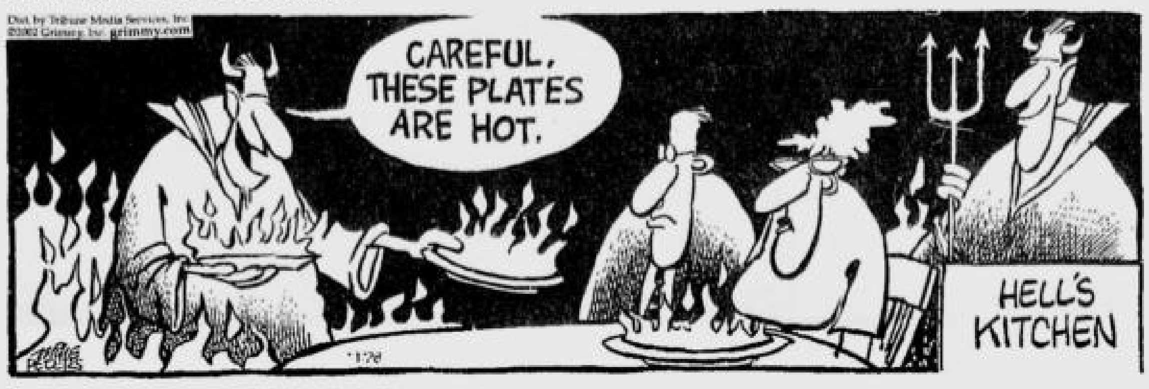
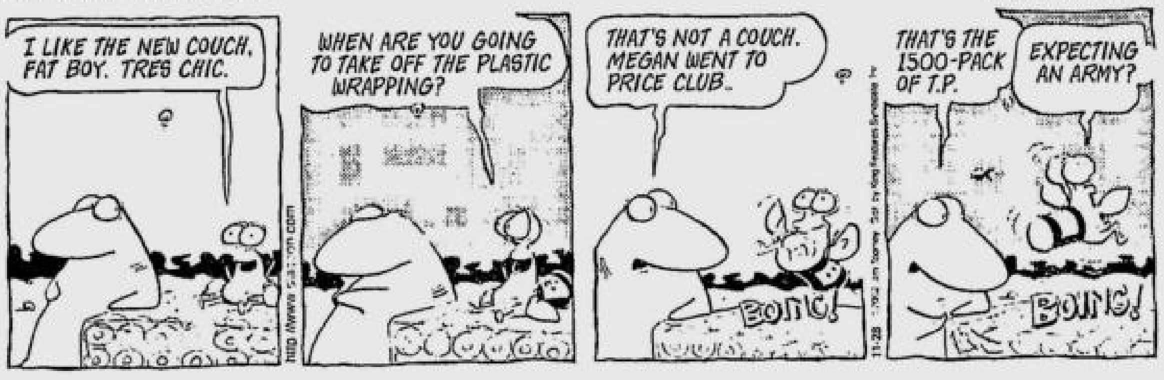
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


Dist. by Tribune Media Services, Inc. ©2002 Grimmy, Inc. grimmy.com
CAREFUL, THESE PLATES ARE HOT.
HELL'S KITCHEN

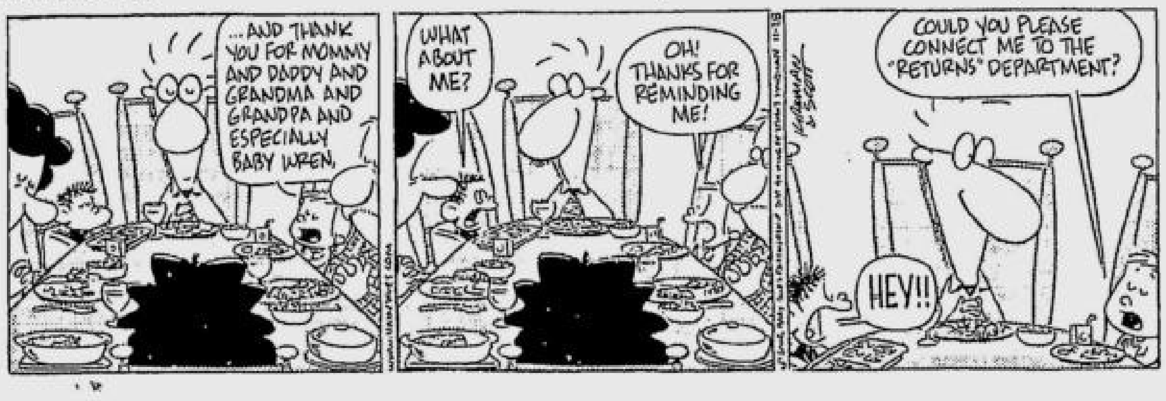
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


I LIKE THE NEW COUCH, FAT BOY. TRES CHIC.
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE OFF THE PLASTIC WRAPPING?
THAT'S NOT A COUCH. MEGAN WENT TO PRICE CLUB.
BOING!
THAT'S THE 1500-PACK OF T.P.
EXPECTING AN ARMY?
BOING!

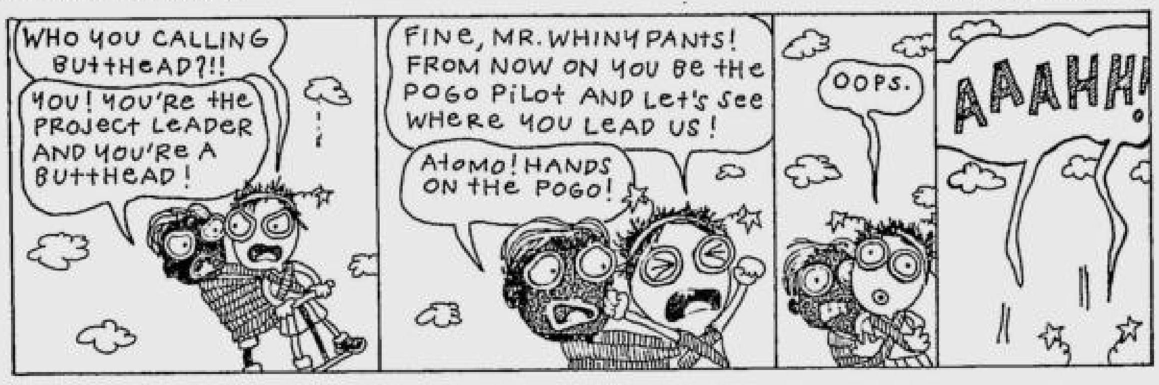
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


...AND THANK YOU FOR MOMMY AND DADDY AND GRANDMA AND GRANDPA AND ESPECIALLY BABY WREN,
WHAT ABOUT ME?
OH! THANKS FOR REMINDING ME!
COULD YOU PLEASE CONNECT ME TO THE "RETURNS" DEPARTMENT?
HEY!!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BYLYRA GARCELLANO


WHO YOU CALLING BUTTHEAD?!!
YOU! YOU'RE THE PROJECT LEADER AND YOU'RE A BUTTHEAD!
FINE, MR. WHINY PANTS! FROM NOW ON YOU BE THE POGO PILOT AND LET'S SEE WHERE YOU LEAD US!
ATOMO! HANDS ON THE POGO!
OOPS.
AAAHH!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ed Harris, Paul Shaffer, Judd Nelson, Randy Newman

Happy Birthday: Don't let confusion lead you in the wrong direction. You have to loosen up a little if you want others to realize what it is you are trying to accomplish. Pick your options wisely and be prepared to do the work yourself if necessary. Your desire to be fair when dealing with others will lead to compromise. Your numbers are 9, 16, 27, 33, 35, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Overindulgence will cause difficulties with a mate or colleague. Remember: Everything in moderation. Be sure to use diplomacy at office functions.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Decorate your premises. You can make your home a wonderful place for friends and family to enjoy. Events and projects should be marked on your calendar so you don't forget an important date.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): It's getting hectic on the home front. Don't spread yourself too thin or unsavory disagreements will be unsettling. If you can manage to get some quiet time you will be more prepared to deal with these pressures.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't overspend. You must not go over your budget today. You have a little extra energy so get busy and let your creative mind wander.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Escapist tendencies will lead you into financial disaster. Don't spend what you don't have. Romantic limitations will be stressful if you haven't cleared the air. Communicating will help restore balance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't make social promises that you can't possibly keep. Spend some time with younger people. Overtime will bring you the extra cash you need.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't let others in on your secrets. You can arrange something very special for the one you love. Visitors in your home may be more than you can handle.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take a vacation. You need to get some peace and quiet. Rejuvenate and make plans for the upcoming year. Let go of the past.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Travel or having social activities in your home will occupy your time. You will find it enjoyable to interact with others. You can earn extra cash by taking on part-time work. Help someone less fortunate.

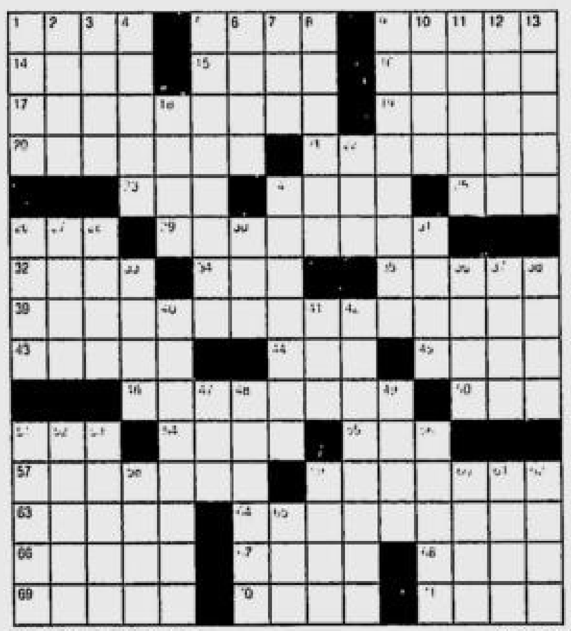
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can make a difference if you take the time to explain things to someone younger or older. Be cautious when making purchases; extravagance will come back to haunt you later.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Contracts and agreements will be of a personal nature. Make sure everything is in order. Your excitement regarding social activities is obvious, so be careful to not ruin the surprise.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't overreact to comments made at work. Remain focused on the business at hand. Involvements with co-workers or employers will not be lasting or fruitful. Keep business and pleasure separate.

Birthday Baby: You will be determined to get your own way. Your willingness to go the extra mile to ensure that everything goes according to your plans will bring admiration as well as jealousy from those you encounter.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Willy A. Wiseman
New York, NY

11/28/02

ACROSS

1 Pea capsules
5 Layer of impurities
9 Partner of Porthos
14 Locality
15 Soprano Gluck
16 Look of the moon
17 Today's first guests
19 Handbag
20 Clipped piece
21 One of today's first hosts
23 Strong desire
24 Adjutant
25 Nod of the head
26 Took a chair
29 Produce anew
32 Sound reflection
34 Shed tears
35 Projecting window
39 Today
43 Later than now
44 Brown shade
45 Just average
46 Establish firmly
50 Actor Cariou
51 "__ Got You Under My Skin"
54 Dyeing vat
55 __ Palmas
57 With 64A, year today was first celebrated
59 Expands
63 Runs at a steady gait
64 See 57A
66 Like a hermit
67 Wide shoe size
68 Skirt cut
69 Weighty
70 Spectrum hues
71 Two-to-one, e.g.

DOWN

1 Bear hands
2 Algerian port
3 Moore of "Disclosure"
4 Overly saccharine
5 Rationality
6 Blood formation
7 Thurman of film
8 Heckle or Jeckle
9 Wisconsin city
10 Ruffian
11 Pres. Truman
12 Actor Davis
13 Appears
18 Sketch artist
22 Mrs. Eddie Cantor
24 Judge
26 Genesis character
27 Suffer heartbreak
28 Comparison word
30 Sprocket
31 Work units
33 At some prior time
36 False god
37 Let up
38 Sue of "Lolita"
40 "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" writer
41 Singer Morrison
42 Gradients
47 Even score
48 Tenant
49 Cause to stop
51 Shiite's belief
52 String quartet member
53 Montreal team
56 Authorization
58 Sawbucks
59 Land title
60 Related
61 Novelist Bagnold
62 Solidifies
65 Itsy-bitsy

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	L	O	B	S	■	C	H	U	M	■	E	D	G	E
K	O	R	E	A	■	A	O	N	E	■	S	O	U	L
I	B	E	A	M	■	R	O	L	L	■	O	U	R	S
T	O	O	G	O	O	D	T	O	B	E	T	R	U	E
■	■	■	L	A	B	■	■	C	A	S	E	■	■	■
R	A	C	E	■	S	A	N	K	■	P	R	A	T	E
A	D	O	■	M	E	M	O	■	A	R	I	S	E	N
J	U	S	T	A	S	P	R	E	D	I	C	T	E	D
A	L	T	A	R	S	■	S	E	A	T	■	E	M	U
S	T	A	I	R	■	B	E	R	G	■	E	R	S	E
■	■	■	L	O	P	E	■	■	I	A	N	■	■	■
H	U	G	E	W	A	S	T	E	O	F	T	I	M	E
I	C	O	N	■	S	T	A	Y	■	R	I	V	E	R
S	L	E	D	■	S	O	L	E	■	O	R	A	N	G
S	A	S	S	■	E	W	E	S	■	S	E	N	D	S

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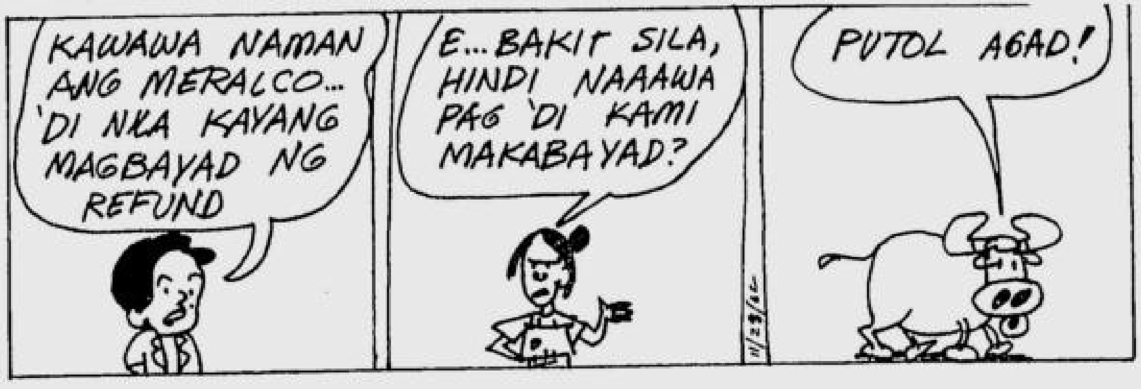
11/28/02

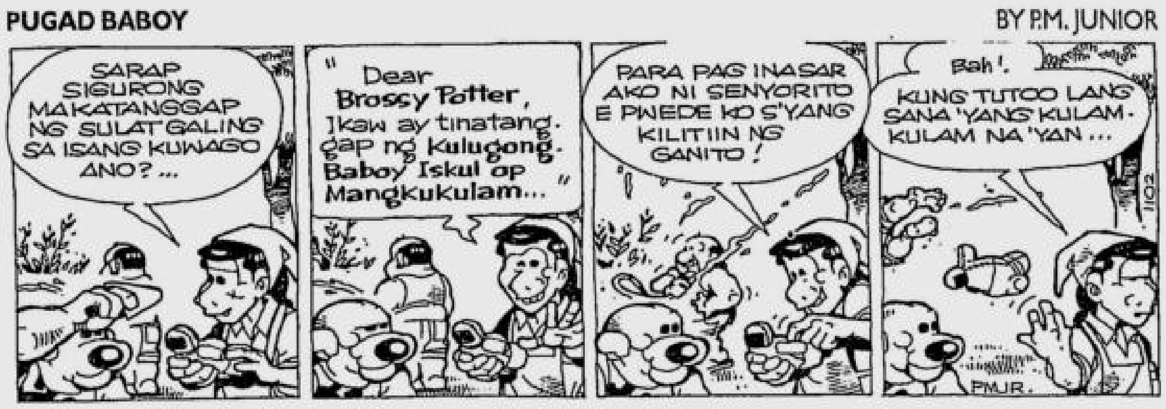
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAWAWA NAMAN ANG MERALCO... 'DI NILA KAYANG MAGBAYAD NG REFUND
E... BAKIT SILA, HINDI NAAAWA PAG 'DI KAMI MAKABAYAD?
PUTOL AGAD!

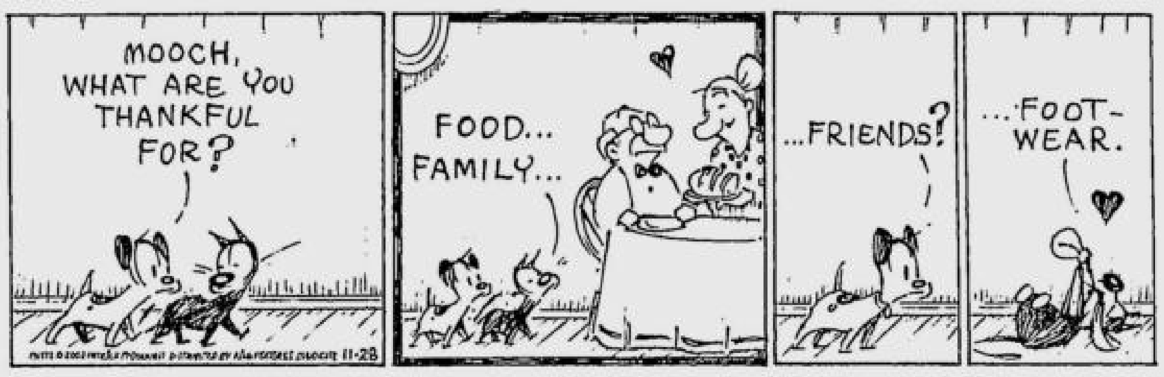
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SARAP SIGURONG MAKATANGGAP NG SULAT GALING SA ISANG KUWAGO ANO?...
" Dear Brossy Potter, Ikaw ay tinatanggap ng Kulugong Baboy Iskul op Mangkukulam... "
PARA PAG INASAR AKO NI SENYORITO E PWEDE KO S'YANG KILITIIN NG GANITO!
Bah!.
KUNG TUTOO LANG SANA 'YANG KULAM-KULAM NA 'YAN...
PMJR.

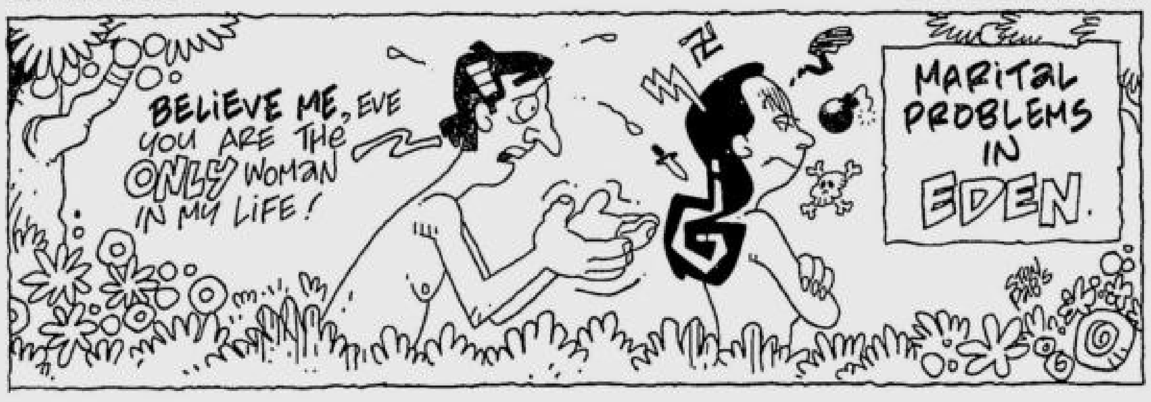
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH, WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?
FOOD... FAMILY...
...FRIENDS?
...FOOT-WEAR.
11-28

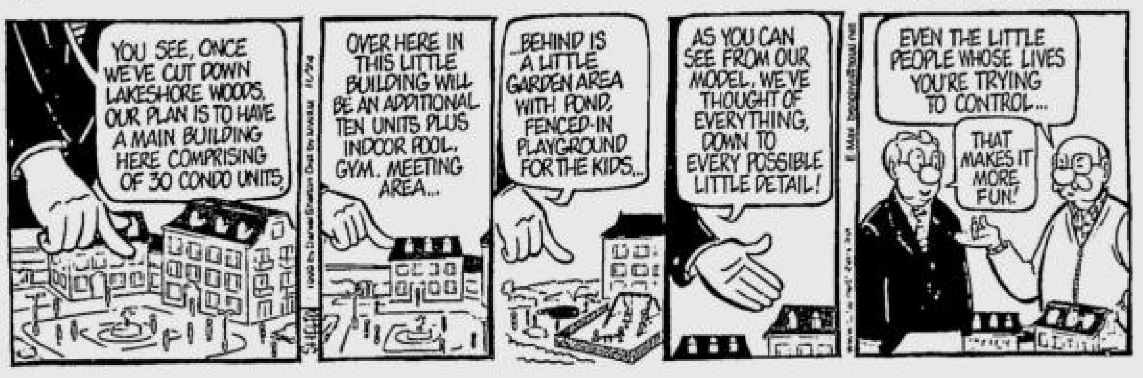
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BELIEVE ME, EVE YOU ARE THE ONLY WOMAN IN MY LIFE!
MARITAL PROBLEMS IN EDEN.

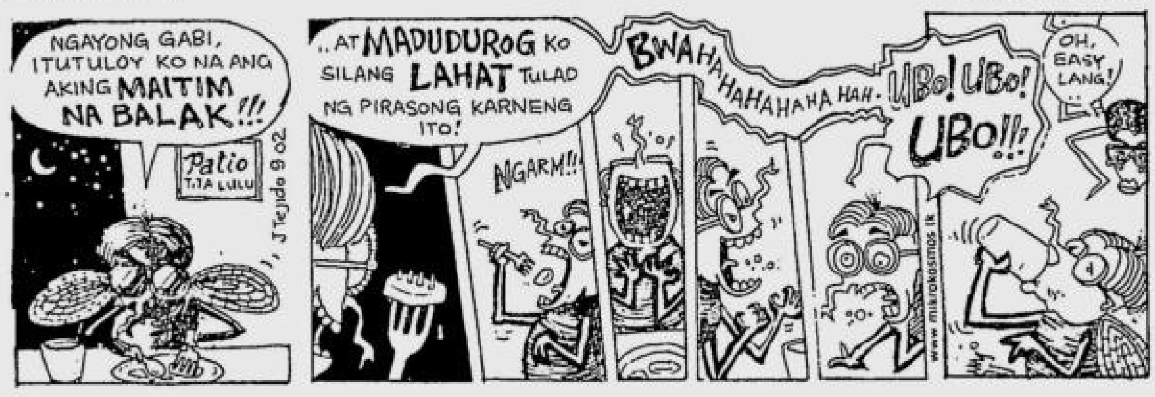
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU SEE, ONCE WE'VE CUT DOWN LAKESHORE WOODS, OUR PLAN IS TO HAVE A MAIN BUILDING HERE COMPRISING OF 30 CONDO UNITS
OVER HERE IN THIS LITTLE BUILDING WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL TEN UNITS PLUS INDOOR POOL, GYM, MEETING AREA...
...BEHIND IS A LITTLE GARDEN AREA WITH POND, FENCED-IN PLAYGROUND FOR THE KIDS...
AS YOU CAN SEE FROM OUR MODEL, WE'VE THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING, DOWN TO EVERY POSSIBLE LITTLE DETAIL!
EVEN THE LITTLE PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES YOU'RE TRYING TO CONTROL...
THAT MAKES IT MORE FUN!

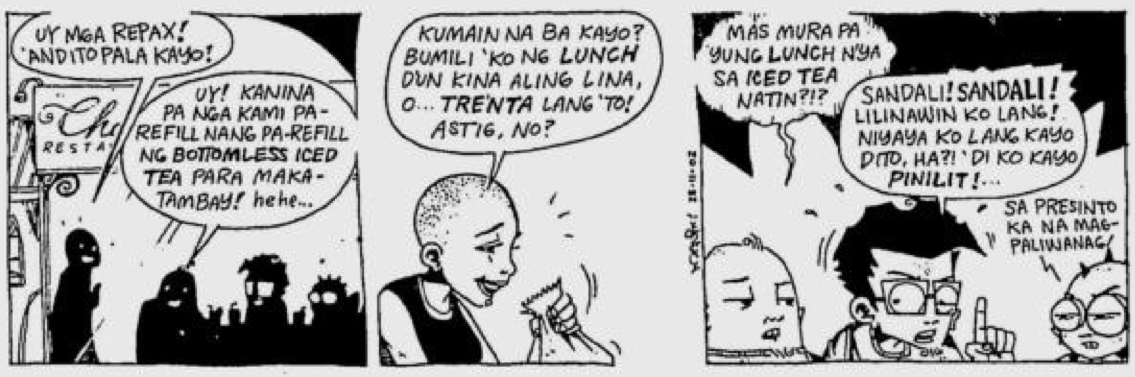
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NGAYONG GABI, ITUTULOY KO NA ANG AKING MAITIM NA BALAK!!!
Patio TITA LULU
J Tejido 9 02
..AT MADUDUROG KO SILANG LAHAT TULAD NG PIRASONG KARNENG ITO!
NGARM!!
BWAHAHAHAHAHAHA HAH.
UBO! UBO! UBO!!!
OH, EASY LANG!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

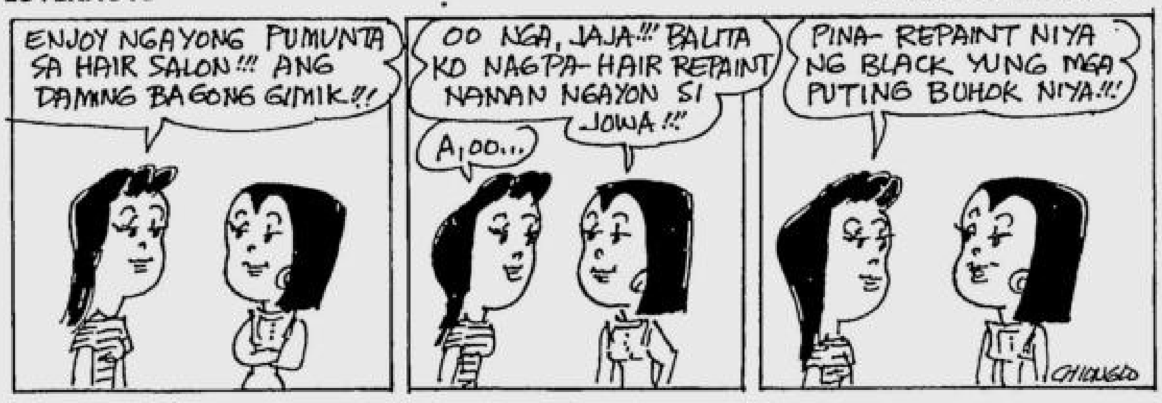
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY MGA REPAX! 'ANDITO PALA KAYO!
UY! KANINA PA NGA KAMI PA-REFILL NANG PA-REFILL NG BOTTOMLESS ICED TEA PARA MAKA-TAMBAY! hehe...
KUMAIN NA BA KAYO? BUMILI 'KO NG LUNCH DUN KINA ALING LINA, O... TRENTA LANG 'TO! ASTIG, NO?
MAS MURA PA 'YUNG LUNCH N'YA SA ICED TEA NATIN?!?
SANDALI! SANDALI! LILINAWIN KO LANG! NIYAYA KO LANG KAYO DITO, HA?! 'DI KO KAYO PINILIT!...
SA PRESINTO KA NA MAG-PALIWANAG!

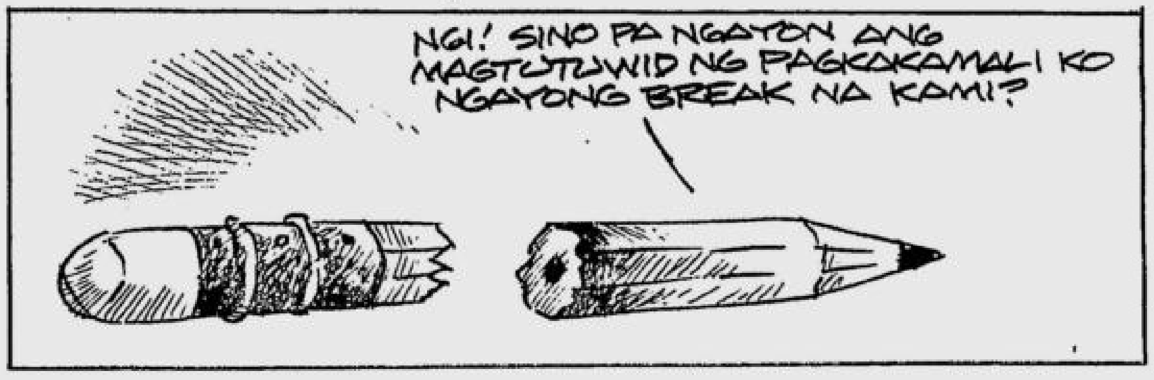
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ENJOY NGAYONG PUMUNTA SA HAIR SALON!!! ANG DAMING BAGONG GIMIK!!!
OO NGA, JAJA!!! BALITA KO NAGPA-HAIR REPAINT NAMAN NGAYON SI JOWA!!
A, OO...
PINA-REPAINT NIYA NG BLACK YUNG MGA PUTING BUHOK NIYA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NGI! SINO PA NGAYON ANG MAGTUTUWID NG PAGKAKAMALI KO NGAYONG BREAK NA KAMI?

Spanish resto introduces new dishes

DON Alba and son Miguel with the six new dishes

SOMETHING new is again brewing at Alba Restaurante Español. And it's something that families, executives, and yuppies in Libis will definitely welcome—a new restaurant right in the heart of Eastwood City.

Located at One Luna Lifestyle Center, the two-story branch offers traditional Spanish fare plus six new dishes by Don Anastacio de Alba.

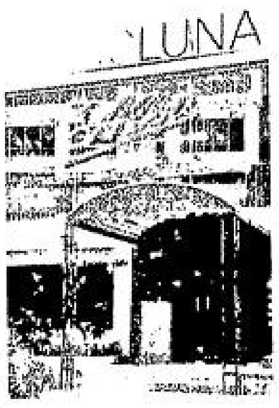
Heading the list is the Solomillo al Rico Rico. This grilled tenderloin steak with paté, mushrooms, sherry wine and brown sauce is a spin-off of Don Alba's Solomillo à la Pobre.

Then there's the Solomillo Toledano, a grilled tenderloin steak with *salsa choron*, red cabbage and garbanzos. Two can share this dish.

Another must-try is the Pollo Romero, which is the restaurant's chicken specialty. This roast chicken is cooked with rosemary, shallots and mushrooms.

Apahap à la Navarra is served with spinach, marble potatoes, leek onions, almonds and Jamon Serrano.

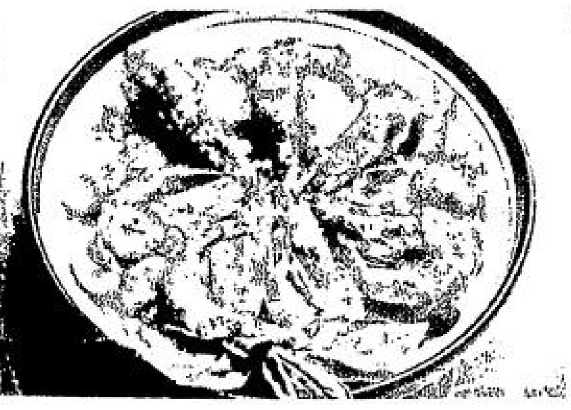
Seafood buffs will love the Langostinos à la Cazuela. Prawns sauteed in olive oil, mushrooms and shallots and flamed with brandy are served in a piping hot *cazuela*.



Those who have made Don Alba's Bacalao à La Vizcaina a part of their dining habit when visiting Alba Restaurant will also love the new Bacalao à la Catalana—salted cod fish with white beans, almonds, tomato sauce and aioli sauce.

These new dishes will also be included in the menu of Alba Restaurante on Polaris Street, Makati City, and Tomas Morato, QC.

Alba's lunch buffet at P350+ will likewise be served in the Libis branch every day starting Nov. 29. There is also a 40-seater function room for special occasions and business meetings. Call 631-2216/17.



LANGOSTINOS
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Marriage of Spanish and Filipino cooking

From page C6

more, until the underside of the tortilla is golden brown. Cut into wedges and serve garnished with flat leaf parsley.

Crema Catalana

475 ml/16 fl oz/2 cups milk
Pared rind of 1/2 lemon
1 cinnamon stick
4 egg yolks
105 ml/7 tbsp caster sugar
25 ml/1 1/2 tbsp corn flour
freshly grated nutmeg

Put the milk in a pan with the lemon rind and cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, and then allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the lemon rind and cinnamon. Place the egg yolks and 45 ml/3 tbsp of sugar in a bowl and whisk until pale yellow. Add the corn flour and mix well. Stir in a few tablespoons of hot milk, then add this mixture to the remaining milk. Cook gently, stirring for about 5 minutes, until thickened and smooth. Do not allow to boil.

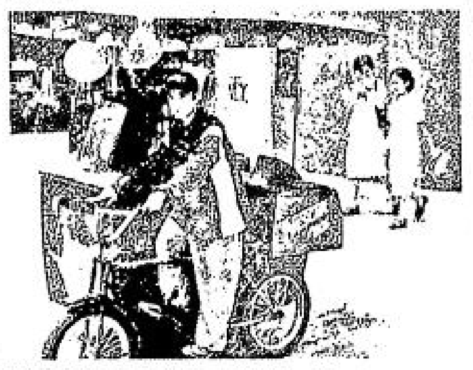
Pour the custard mixture into four shallow overproof dishes, about 13 cm/5 in a diameter. Leave to cool, then chill for a few hours, overnight if possible, until firm. Before serving, sprinkle each pudding with 15 ml/1 tbsp sugar and a little grated nutmeg. Preheat the grill to high. Place the chilled pudding under the hot grill, on the highest shelf, and cook them until the sugar topping caramelizes by turning brown and crunchy. This will take only a few seconds. Leave the desserts to cool for a few minutes before serving.

Fried chicken house renovated

"THE FIRST House that Fried Chicken Built" has now been redeveloped, but maintained its authentic and well-known structure that has surpassed the test of time.

Max's Restaurant Scout Tuazon, Quezon City, after 57 years of servicing its loyal and ever-satisfied diners, presently boasts newly restored function rooms and a cozy main dining area, which makes every guest feel at home. This restaurant, where the success of the unique fried chicken recipe of Ruby all started, still gives an unmatched dining experience.

Since the early 1940s when the American soldiers tasted the all-Filipino, tender and crispy-skinned fried chicken of Maximo Gimenez, the food in Max's Scout Tuazon has always been at its best. This house indeed holds under its roof the legacy of its true founders. Because it has been made better, Max's Scout Tuazon promises a more unparalleled service and superior food, one that will always be Max's *masarap*.



THE NESCAFE Cool Coffee Carts, an innovative approach in ambulant selling, make inexpensive coffee concoctions more accessible. Blue Nescafe Cool mobile carts can be spotted around Manila's university belt (Mendiola, Morayta and C.M. Recto) serving Nescafe Cool Mochaccino, priced at only P18 per 12 oz glass.

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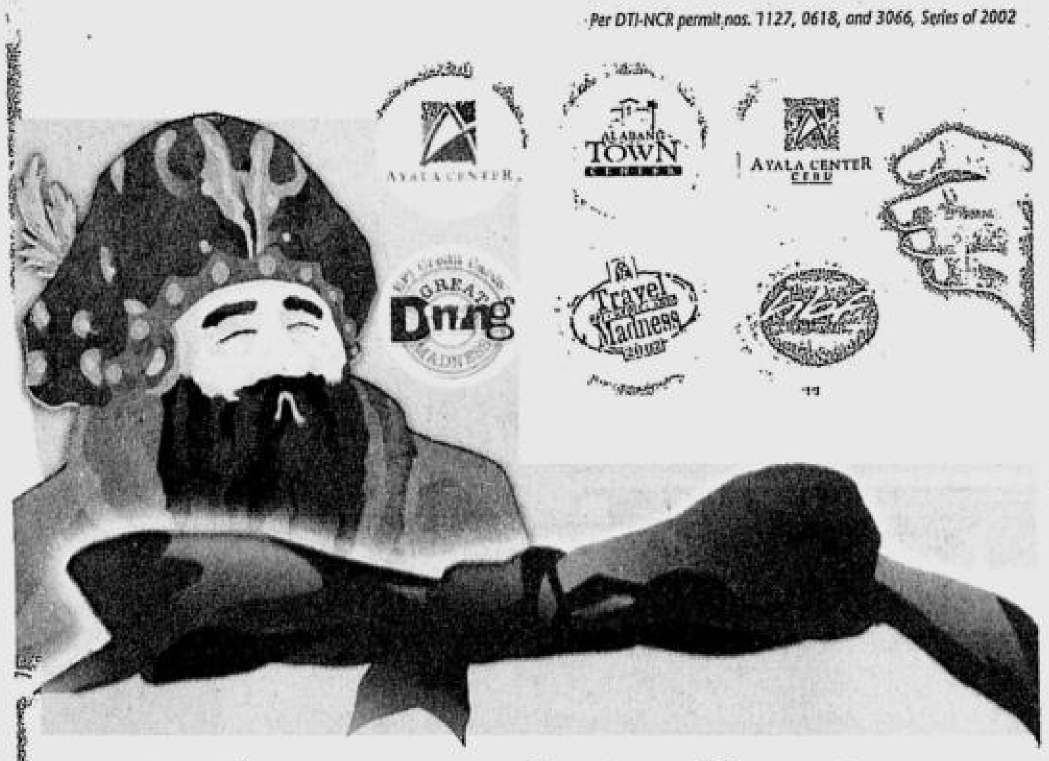

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DECEMBER SCHEDULE
RECREATIONAL AND ONE-DAY BUSINESS CLASS

Dec. 02, Mon. – MODERN AND EASY PASTA SAUCES. In this class, Chef Jun-jun will demonstrate a new set of tasty pasta sauces with familiar ingredients to tickle your palate: Clam & Anchovy in Olive oil; Armida's Delight; Gorgonzola and Red Bell Pepper Sauce; Tuna and Sun-dried Tomatoes; Lemon Butter Sauce and Three Mushroom Cream with White Truffle Oil. Recipes include all ingredients from 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. for P1,500.00.

Dec. 03, Tues. – THE ART OF JAPANESE FRYING. Chef Rikichi Aoki from Osaka, Japan teaches the simple art of Favorite Japanese Fried Dishes in this class that features Tempura, Katsudon, Tongkatsu, Donburi plus the sauces that accompanies every dish. Recipes include all ingredients for P1,200.00 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Dec. 04, Wed. – A SPANISH CHRISTMAS MEAL 3. Another set of Spanish recipes from Ms. Betina Legarda that you will truly enjoy. Recipes include Camarones con Crema, Callos Especiales (Receta Kahn) Variacion I, Ensalada Russa, Lengua con Champignones Y Vino, Pollo ala Narangja and Macedon de Fruta Para Las Navidades for P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. **NEW CLASS**

Dec. 05, Thurs. – SUSHI & SASHIMI WORKSHOP. Chef Rikichi Aoki from Osaka, Japan will teach us simple and basic recipes in doing Sushi and Sashimi. Recipes include California Roll, Tekka Roll, Tekka Maki, Tuna, Shrimp, Ika (Squid), Tamago, Salmon and the making of Sushi Rice and Sauces. For P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Dec. 06, Fri. – HOLIDAY TURKEY TREAT. Impress your friends with a complete Turkey dinner for the coming Holiday. Recipes include 4 kinds of Stuffing, Giblet Gravy, Corn Bread, Split Pea Soup, Old Fashioned Fruit Salad and Glazed Sweet Potatoes with Campfire Crust. P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Dec. 09, Mon. – COOKING WITH BEEF 1 Italian Meat loaf, Beef and Eggplant Moussaka, Pot Roast, Oxtail Stew, Savory Short Ribs and Rib Eye Misono are the Beef meals the whole family will enjoy from Chef Junjun's heirloom recipes. 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. for P1,500.00 including all ingredients.

Dec. 10, Tues. – SEAFOOD FUSION. Exciting east-west seafood dishes originally created by Chef Gene Gonzalez for special dinners that are memorable to palate and pocket like Lapu-lapu in Spicy Cracker Nut Garlic Sauce, Prawns in Shrimp Essence and Light Curry Sauce with Mango, Shrimps on Toast with Mango Salsa and Roasted Seabass with Five-Spice Butter and Fried Leeks. For P1,500.00 from 1 – 4 PM. Recipes include all ingredients.

Dec. 11, Wed. – YULETIDE DISHES. Enjoy the season with grand Christmas main dishes for the whole family to enjoy. Chef Junjun shares to you Stuffed Cornish Hen, Zarzuela de Mariscos, Crown Roast of Pork with Wild Rice Stuffing, Beef Wellington and Baked Lapu-lapu in Lemon Capers Sauce for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. **NEW CLASS**

Dec. 14, Sat. – A TASTE OF VIETNAM 1. Chef Chariya borrows from her Vietnamese side and presents recipes such as Finger Chili Sauce, Chagio (Spring Rolls), Pickled Vegetables, Vietnamese Chicken Salad, Nem Nuong with Sauce, Pho (Beef Soup) and Sago with Buko for P1,200.00 including all ingredients. 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

THE PROFESSIONAL CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM

The Professional Culinary Arts Program prepares students for professional entry into the food service industry. This intensive program integrates classical and modern culinary techniques with kitchen management skills. Students learn how to prepare soups, sauces, vegetables, entrees, breads, pastries and desserts. They will learn how to identify, fabricate and portion meat, poultry, fish and shellfish. The course will also provide the introductory skills on Asian cooking, wine appreciation and table service.

The program is a hands-on training series for students to gain proficiency in various skills needed to perform at professional standards in a commercial kitchen. The students will also learn to prepare buffets and formal meals. The program has Internship or In-house Practicum for 200 hours and Externship or Outside Practicum for 200 hours. Enrollment includes 2 sets of uniforms, chef's kit, manual and all the ingredients to be used.

Classes will start on February. For inquiries and reservations, call 726-9326 or 725-5089 and look for Marilyn or Glady.

Heny Sison

THE ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES. This 20-day hands on Essential Cooking Series is our innovative way of teaching the basics of cooking and baking. This program is for anyone who wants to work towards becoming a professional chef. Classes begin on January 24, 2003 and ends on March 29, 2003. Classes are held every Fridays and Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

THE ESSENTIAL OF BAKING & PASTRY SERIES. This 26-day hands-on class will cover the basics of pastry, desserts and bread baking as well as cake decorating. It is suitable for those seeking an entry level position in a pastry shop, hotel or restaurant. Classes begin on January 23, 2003 and ends on July 24, 2003. Classes are held every Thursdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

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Sign up now to secure your spot as the class fills up quickly. Tuition fee includes ingredients, manual, aprons, chef's jacket and chef's kit. For more information call Lirio at telephone # 726-5316 & 412-7792.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

December 2 (Monday) 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. P1,500 BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison, *Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing

December 2 (Monday) 2:00-5:30 p.m. P1,500 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY RECIPES by: Heny Sison, *Dark Fruitcake, White Fruitcake, Walnut Torte, Rum-Raisin Walnut Cheesecake, Festive Cookie Bar and Prune Bar. Packaging ideas will be shown in the class

December 3 (Tuesday) 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. P1,500 EASY NO-BAKE DESSERTS by: Chef Jill Sandique, Chef / Food Consultant & Food Stylist. Blue Ribbon graduate of Peter Kump's New York Cooking School * Frozen Coffee Cream Roll, Chocolate Bavarian Mousse, Floating Island, Mango Ice Box Cake, Buko-Pandan and Butterscotch Banana Cream Pie

December 3 (Tuesday) 2:00-5:00 p.m. P1,700 BAKED PASTAS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio, owner of C'est Si Bon and Goodies N'Sweets. Dean's List graduate of culinary at the California Culinary Academy * Beef Lasagna, Vegetable Lasagna, Chicken Macaroni, Baked Spaghetti and Baked Seafood Pasta

December 4 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. P1,500 ALL AMERICAN PIES by: Chef Jill Sandique, *Black Bottom Pie, Boston Cream Pie, Derby Pie, Mud Pie, Key Lime Pie and Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cream Pie

December 4 (Wednesday) 2:00-5:00 p.m. P1,700 CHRISTMAS DINNER by: Chef Aileen Anastacio, * Asparagus and Prosciutto Rolls, Cream of Brocolli Soup, Rose Petal Salad with Raspberry Vinaigrette, Herb Roasted Tenderloin with Mushroom Gravy, Seared Prawns with Sauce Choron, Sundried Tomato Pesto Pasta & Applie Pie with Bourbon Pecan

December 5 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. P1,500 COOKIES FOR GIVING by: Heny Sison * Springerie, Rugelach, Melting Moments, Macadamia Blondies with Caramel Glaze, Christmas Cantuccini & Snickerdoodles

December 5 (Thursday) 2:00-5:00 p.m. P1,500 CHRISTMAS BARS & COOKIES by: Heny Sison, * Food for the Gods, Carmela's Bar, Oatmeal Lace Cookies, Macaroon Cups, Ruvel Bar and Macadamia Cookies

December 6 (Friday) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P2,500 HOMEMADE SAUSAGES, CONDIMENTS & MARINADE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jane Paredes, Chef / Food Consultant, co-owner of Café Cornocopia, trained at the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York and Peter Kump's New York Cooking School *Discover ways to transform meat, poultry and seafood into profitable menu items. **SAUSAGES:** Chorizo Bilbao, Longanisa Ilongga, Italian Sausage, Seafood Sausage & Mexican Sausage; **CONDIMENTS:** Honey-Mustard Sauce, Sweet Pickles Chips and Atchara, **MARINADE:** Homemade Tapa, Homemade Bulgogi & Tocino. **DISH:** Sausage, Sauerkraut & Potato Casserole and Country Style Pork & Beans

December 7 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. P2,500 PRIMI E SECONDI-PIATTI E DOLCI (Italian First and Second Dishes and Desserts) **by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli,** Master Pizzaiolo & Barista, Food Consultant of various Italian restaurants all over Metro Manila, graduated at Culinary Institute, Milan Italy * Fresh Multi-Colored Pasta and Sauces: Lasagna, Ravioli, Tortellini and Cannelloni. Sacalloppine Di Vitello Al Limone (Scallop of Veal accented with Lemon Juice), Petto di Pollo al Funghi (Chicken Breast with Mushroom Sauce), Filetto di Maiale Allo Yoghurt (Pork Tenderloin with Yoghurt Sauce) Desserts. Tiramisu and Panna Cotta. Demonstration with student participation

December 9 (Monday) 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. P2,500 NATIVE KAKANIN WORKSHOP An Ideal Gift for the Holidays! **by: Heny Sison** * Tamales, Suman sa Lihia, Suman, Puto Bumbong, Espasol, Palitao & Maja Mais

December 10 (Tuesday) 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P2,000 BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP I by Chef Jill Sandique, * Brioche, Egg Pan de Sal, Anadama Bread, Cinnamon Coffee Cake, Multigrain Bread, Pullman, American Black and Braided Loaf

December 11 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P2,000 HOLIDAY DESSERTS by: Heny Sison, * Fudgy Nut Cookies, Cashew Tart, Rum Cake, Devils Food Cake Bar with Caramel Pecan Topping, Lemon Torte (most requested cake!) and Cookies and Cream Cake

December 12 (Thursday) 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P2,000 BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP II by: Chef Jill Sandique, * Cuban Bread, Pita, Soft Pretzel, Flour Tortilla, Naan, Poori, Baguette, Pain de Campagne and English Muffins

December 13 (Friday) 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P2,500 DESIGNER PIZZA & CALZONE by: Chef Jill Sandique, * Classical Cheese Pizza, Thai Chicken Pizza, Peking Duck Pizza, Goat Cheese Pizza, Shrimp Scampi Pizza, Smoked Salmon Pizza, Mou Shu Chicken Calzone plus bonus recipe

December 14 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. P1,500 CAKES WITH DISTINCTION by: Heny Sison * Sinful Chocolate Cake, Caramel Cake, Custard Cake, Canonigo with Creme Anglaise & Mango Coulis and Layered Brazo de Mercedes

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ALFREDO Roca, food and beverage consultant of Barceló Hotels and Resorts

Marriage of Spanish and Filipino cooking

IT will certainly excite your palate when authentic Spanish cuisine is served together with Filipino food.

Alfredo Roca, food and beverage consultant for all the properties of Spain-based Barceló Hotels and Resorts, has been doing just that. He has redesigned the menus of the Barceló properties in the country by introducing Spanish food and products to complement the local cuisine.

Through the recipes below, Roca shares some secrets of authentic Spanish cooking which many Filipinos now look forward to when they visit a Barceló hotel.

Call 894-4656, fax 813-0564 or log on to www.barcelo-asia.com.

Paella
(serves 6)

1/3 cup of olive oil
1 small onion, minced
2-3 doves of garlic, crushed
3-5 tbsp minced fresh parsley
1 generous pinch of saffron
3 skinless chicken breast, cut large chunks
2 green peppers, sliced
1 red pepper, sliced
1 tsp of saffron
8 oz tomato sauce
4 cup of rice
7 cups of water
salt
1/2 lb-1 lb shrimp, leave shell on
1 b scallops

Sauté onion, parsley and garlic in olive oil until the onion becomes transparent. Add saffron, chicken, pepper and sauté until chicken becomes white. Add tomato sauce. Stir. Add rice and water and bring to boil. Salt to taste. Boil for 5 minces, stirring occasionally. Add shrimp and scallop; boil an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Simmer for 10 minutes covered. If the rue appears to be getting too dry during the last 10 minutes, add more water. If the rice is too wet at the end of 10 minutes, uncover and evaporate unwanted liquid.

Tortilla de Patata

450 g/ 1 lb small waxy potatoes
1 small onion
200 ml olive oil
6 eggs
salt and freshly ground black pepper
flat leaf parsley, to garnish

With a sharp knife, peel the potatoes and slice them thinly. Slice the onion thinly and separate the slices into rings. Heat 30 ml/2 tbsp of the oil in a 20 cm/8 in heavy-based frying pan. Add the potatoes and onion and cook, stirring frequently, over low heat for about 10 minutes, until the potatoes are just tender. Remove from the heat. In a large bowl, beat together the eggs with little salt and pepper. Stir in the sliced potatoes and onion. Heat the remaining oil in the frying pan and put in the potato mixture. Cook for 5-8 minutes, until the mixture is almost set. Place a large plate upside-down over the pan; invert the tortilla on the plate and then slide it back into the pan. Cook for 2-3 minutes

MARRIAGE/ C5

LIFESTYLE

What's inside

Italy when it sizzles
/p. D2

The reign in Spain of the tender 'jamon'
/p. D6

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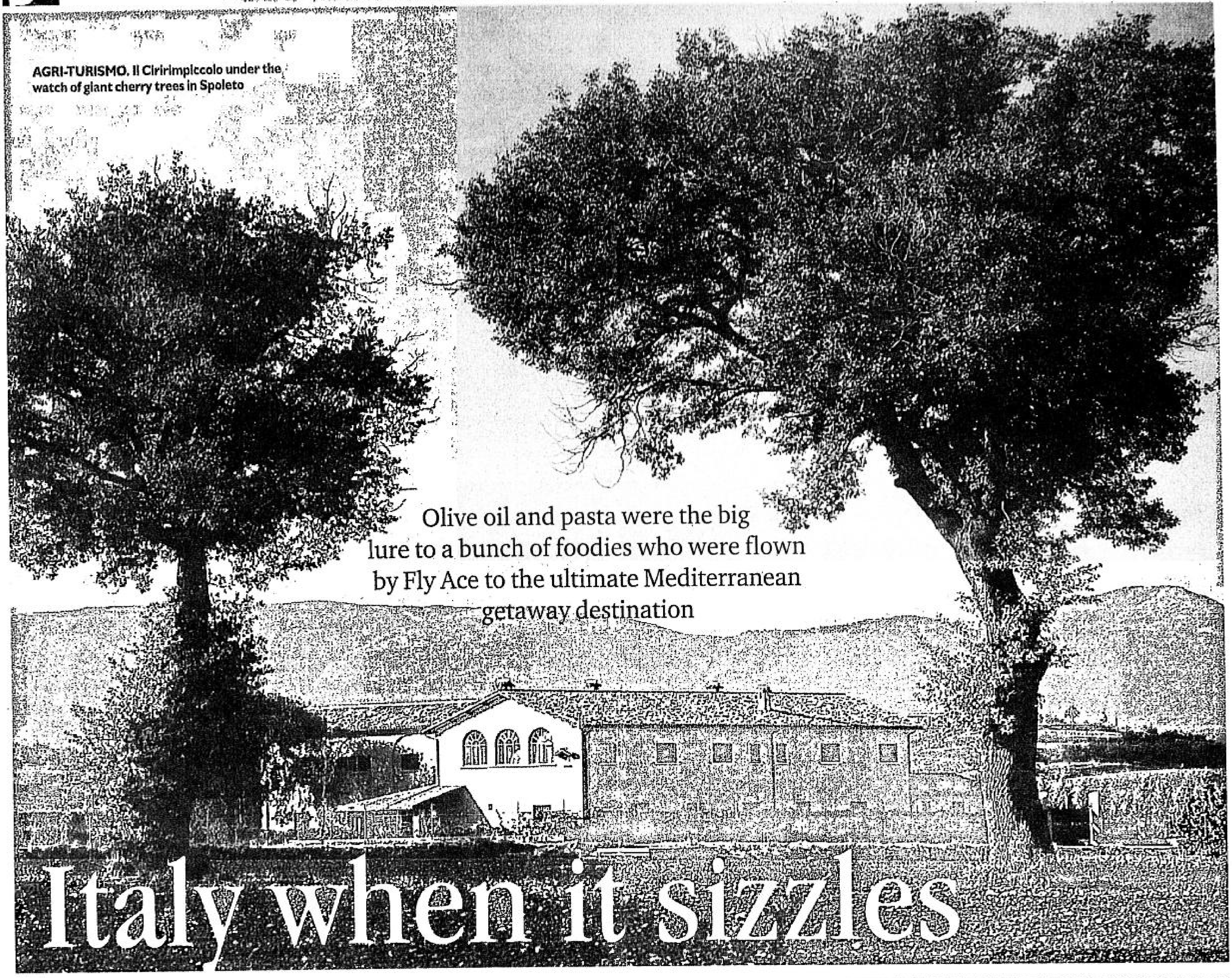

AGRI-TURISMO. Il Cirimpiccolo under the watch of giant cherry trees in Spoleto

Italy when it sizzles

Olive oil and pasta were the big lure to a bunch of foodies who were flown by Fly Ace to the ultimate Mediterranean getaway destination

Text and photos by
Chelo Banal-Formoso

THERE we were in Italy in the heart of summer, a ragtag bunch of journalists and foodies in hot pursuit of the twin verities of Italian cuisine, namely pasta and olive oil.

Fly Ace Corp. brought us there as a fitting finale to its Great Mediterranean Getaway promo. Since January, the company had been hosting either lunch or dinner prepared by a prominent chef using Federici pasta and Pietro Coricelli olive oil.

The man who has been piloting Fly Ace's successful distributorship of both brands in the Philippines, not to mention a whole host of food products, is Jun Conchanco. Now if Conchanco runs the family-owned company as intelligently, attentively and graciously as he led our group throughout our Italian sojourn, you should have no doubt that Fly Ace is in darn good hands.

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Amelia would seem like a sleepy town to anyone used to the din and dirt of living in Manila, but it had so much to offer in terms of ancient history and culture.

The old town was abloom with flowers when we visited. It easily charmed into its alleys this weary traveler whose CQ (cultural quotient) had heretofore been pegged to pop art and nothing but pop art.

Amelia's pride

The center of Amelia's economy is the Federici pasta plant, as well it should be for its more than 100 years of solicitude, having employed people in Amelia and neighboring towns since its founding in 1888. The company produces about 100 different cuts of pasta (yes, your spaghetti, too), and exports to more than 100 countries.

To continue with the fascination with the number 100, Federici pasta is made 100 percent in Umbria, the region that claims to grow the best durum wheat in Italy. Mixed with the spring water of Amelia, the wheat semolina then undergoes high-tech processes that lead up to its equally modern packaging. The result is a quality product. The same Amelia plant also churns out an assortment of egg pasta.

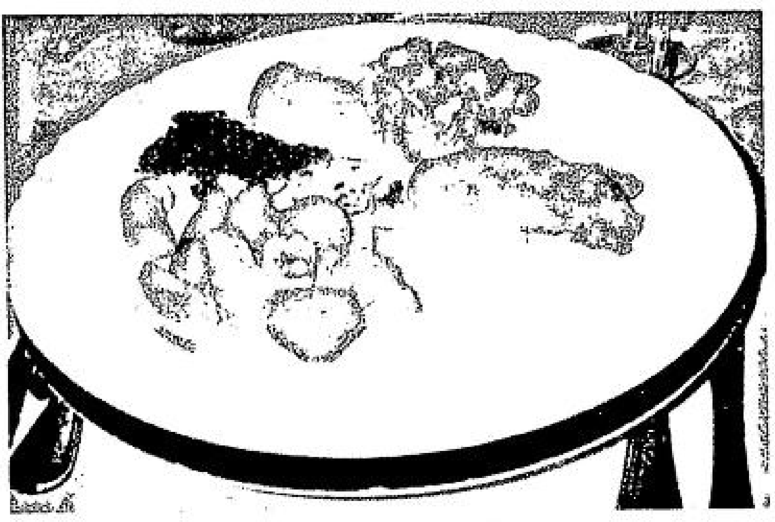
Real Italian

Federici pasta is the only pasta Filipinos

ITALY/ D3

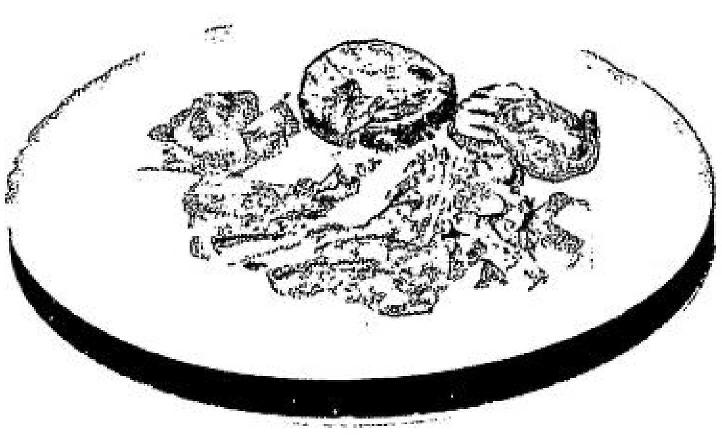
PEDIGREED. Pietro Coricelli extra virgin olive oil and Cuoci Oliva, olive oil that is used for cooking.

TODI Mayor Ktiusca Marini and Federici Pasta export manager Mario Angelini hand plaque of appreciation to Fly Ace's Jun Conchanco.

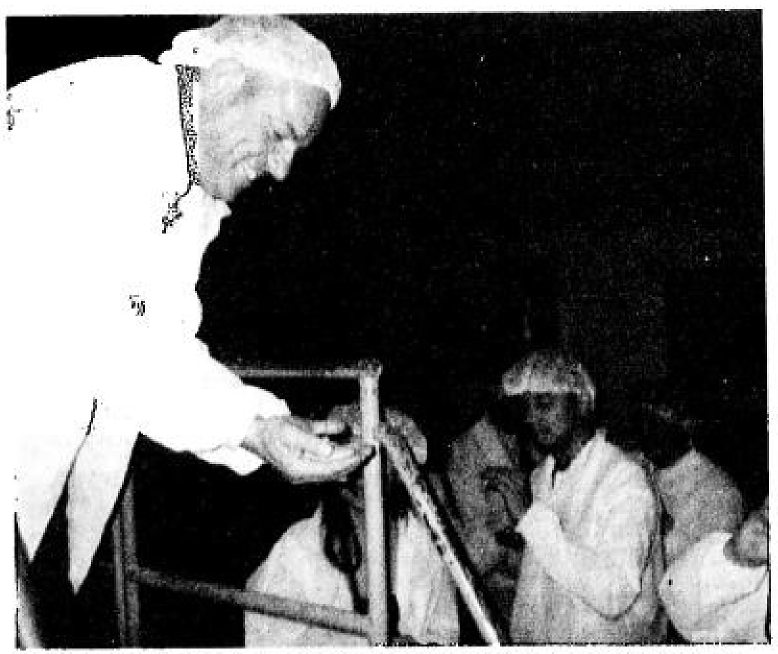


ANTIPASTO. Zucchini blossom fritters stuffed with mozzarella, assorted vegetable fritters, bruschetta with olive purée, bruschetta with tomatoes

PRIMI PIATTI. Taglione with truffles



SECONDI PIATTI. Grilled veal over arugula salad and roasted eggplant, zuccini and red pepper

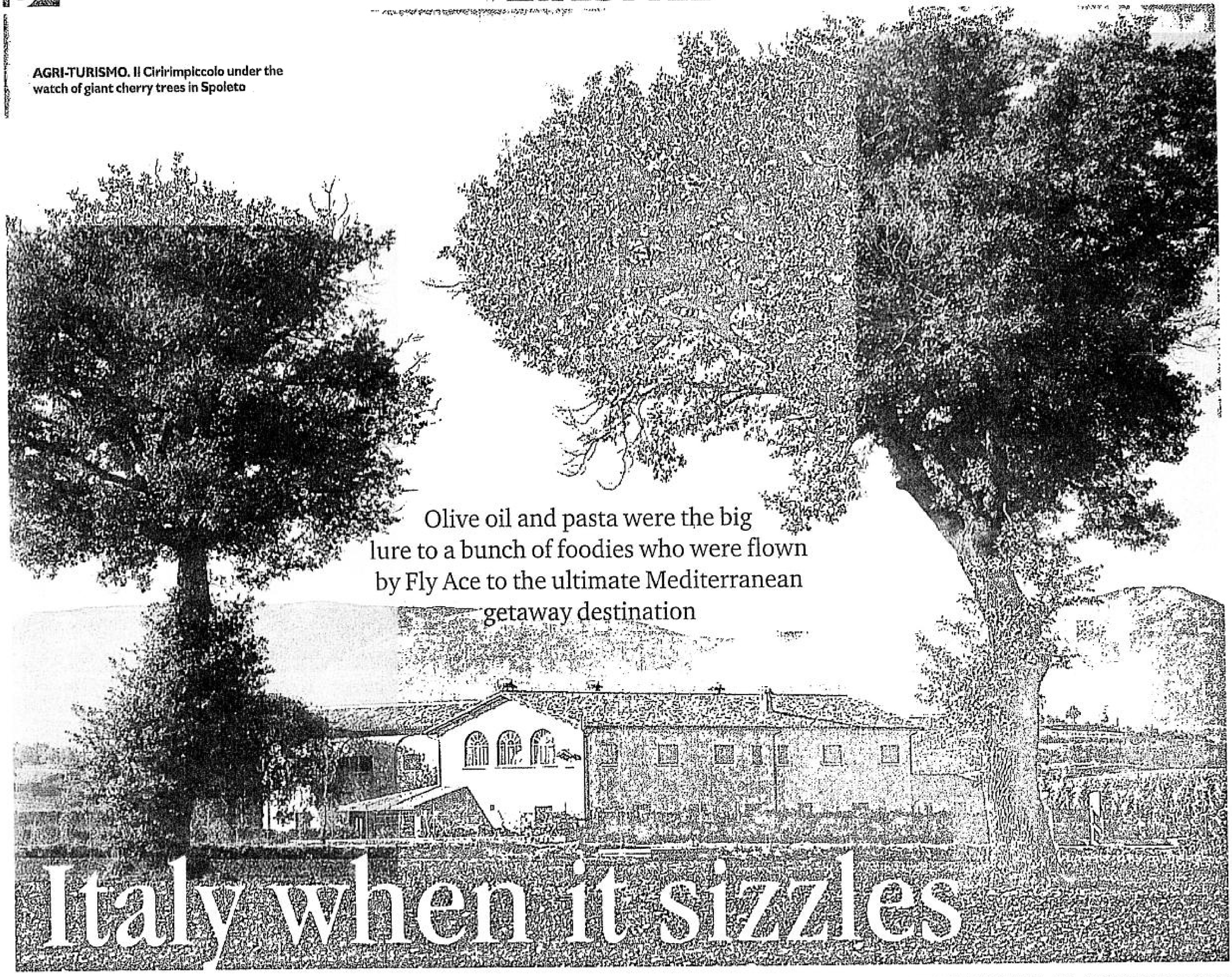


NOODLE FACTORY. Mario Angelini shows cuts of pasta to visitors from the Philippines.

PHOTOS BY RAFFY JUAN

HOLY ORDER. Claudio Coricelli entertains a customer from one of the many religious congregations of Italy.

DESSERT. Frozen soufflé with orange and strawberry sauce



AGRI-TURISMO. Il Cirirmpiccolo under the watch of giant cherry trees in Spoleto

Italy when it sizzles

Olive oil and pasta were the big lure to a bunch of foodies who were flown by Fly Ace to the ultimate Mediterranean getaway destination

Text and photos by
Chelo Banal-Formoso

THERE we were in Italy in the heart of summer, a ragtag bunch of journalists and foodies in hot pursuit of the twin verities of Italian cuisine, namely pasta and olive oil.

Fly Ace Corp. brought us there as a fitting finale to its Great Mediterranean Getaway promo. Since January, the company had been hosting either lunch or dinner prepared by a prominent chef using Federici pasta and Pietro Coricelli olive oil.

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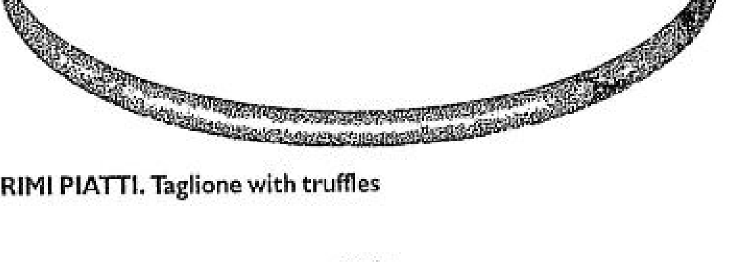

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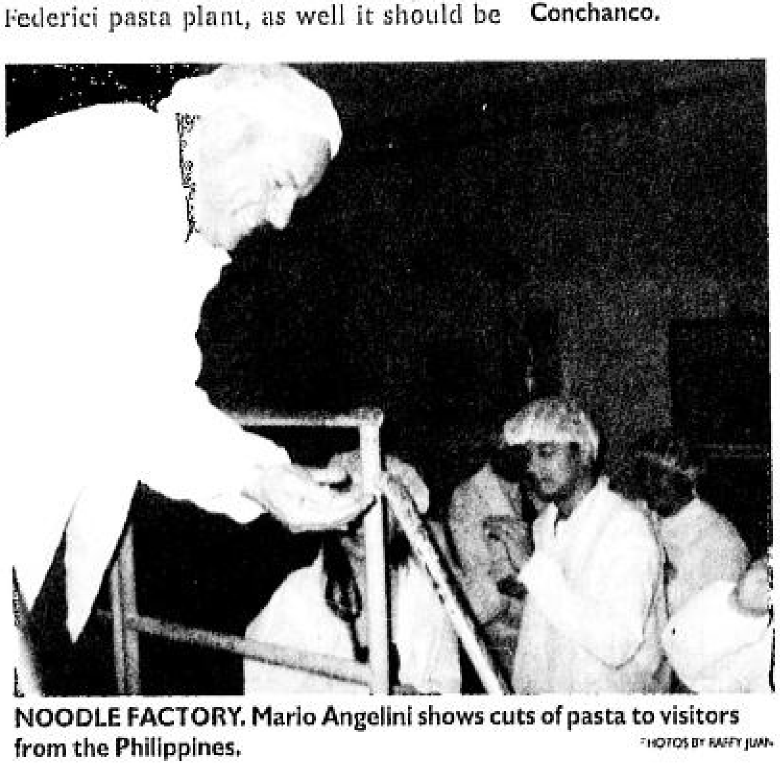

NOODLE FACTORY. Mario Angelini shows cuts of pasta to visitors from the Philippines.

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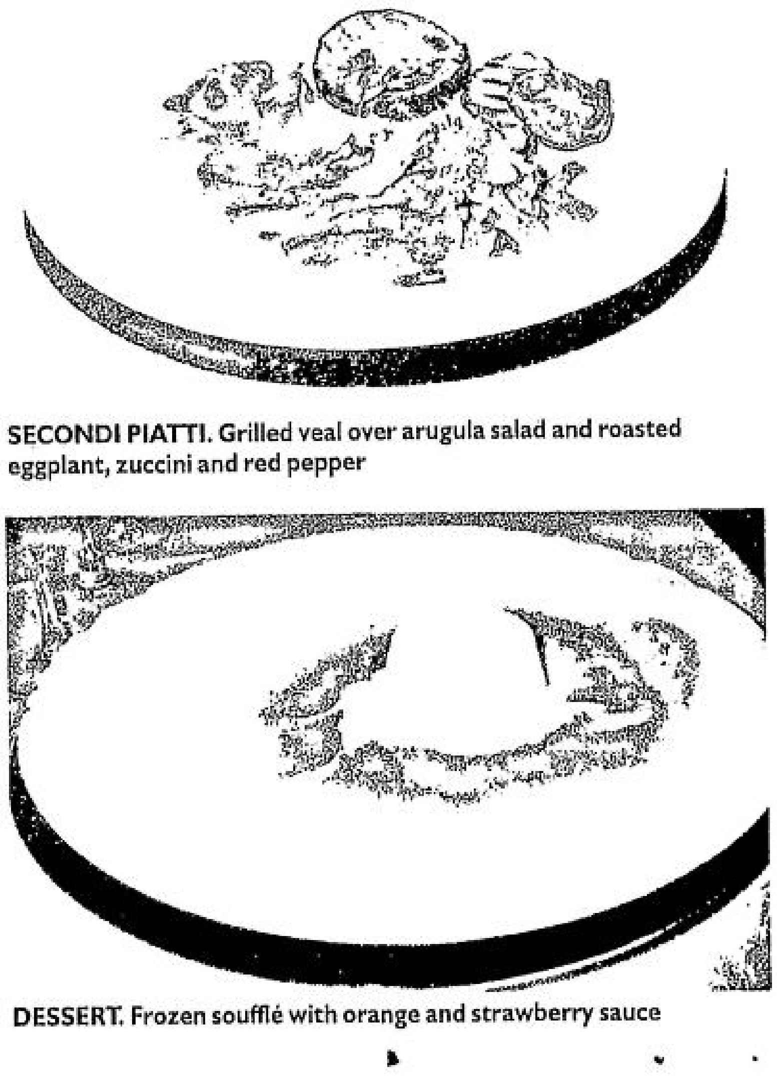


DESSERT. Frozen soufflé with orange and strawberry sauce

Italy when it sizzles

From page D2

can buy from their local supermarkets that is made in Italy.

"How many of your competitors can claim that?" Federici's export sales manager Mario Angelini pointed out with pride to Conchanco. And that is exactly the reason Federici is doing very well in the local market, thank you very much. So well that in neighboring Todi, right in the town hall, a small ceremony took place to honor Conchanco as one of Federici's most important importers. The plaque of appreciation was handed out by no less than mayor Katiusca Marini of Todi, which has been named the most pleasant city in the world to live in a University of Kentucky study.

Back to Hotel Amelia where we were billeted. Our Italian visit is unforgettable mostly because of the time we spent dining as a group. We never ran out of funny stories, from Jackie Chan wines to Pinoy fake blackbelters in Germany. As for the food, Vicky Veloso-Barerra would always take the first taste of any dish and instantly know what went into its making. Her husband Roberto, who lived in Italy for many years because his father used to be the Philippine ambassador there, interpreted for us whenever we needed information.

The terrific thing about food is that little translation is needed because flavors can do the talking to your tastebuds. For instance, from the time we were served prosciutto with melon as an antipasto at our first lunch, we kept asking for prosciutto, and we managed beautifully without an interpreter. First thing in the morning we would look for it. So much for healthy eating.

Unless we asked for eggs and prosciutto, breakfast in Italy was seldom a grand production, at least not in Hotel Amelia nor in the next hotel where we stayed. All we had was a choice between coffee cake or crackers, but the coffee lovers among us had their fill of genuine espresso.

Even in our other homebase, the Il Cirimpiccolo in Spoleto, it was all-you-can-drink espresso, not to mention all-you-can-stand caffeine. A lovely country estate located right in the property where Pietro Coricelli operates its olive oil plant, Il Cirimpiccolo is run along the *agri-turismo* program.

From this inn guarded by an age-old cherry tree (the name is Italian for "cherry") we walked down a straight path to the olive oil factory.

Our group was taken around the plant by Pietro Coricelli export manager Luca Archilei so we could better appreciate the state-of-the-art facilities that have been producing one of the world's most prestigious olive oil brands.

We were told the plant operated with 65 employees divided into three teams. That didn't seem like a lot until we saw the astonishingly high-tech Italian equipment used in olive oil production.

"It's very important to produce olive oil according to the old ways but we apply old ways to modern technology," said Archelei.

Pietro Coricelli is one of the few olive-oil companies in Italy that is still family-owned. It was was founded in 1939 by Pietro Coricelli, who remains honorary president. Sons Antonio and Claudio now take care of marketing and administration, respectively.

Claudio Coricelli, who looked like Paul McCartney with business brains, presided over a short press conference cum taste test. Like wine, you swirl the olive oil in your mouth, but unlike wine you don't swallow. Rather, you slurp it until it almost gets to your throat and then you stop and spit it out.

According to Coricelli, there is a team of people educated to taste olive oil to check for quality. Normally, olive oil has to pass six out of seven tests.

But, noted Claudio, "the most difficult test for any extra virgin olive oil is the bread test." If Italian food is your weakness, you know that you can never, never trust another oil but olive oil for your bruschetta.

Oil from trees

Olive oil is the only vegetable oil that comes from trees rather than herbaceous plants.

Pietro Coricelli covers the complete cycle of the olive oil industry—"from the tree to the bottle," boasted Luca. The company monitors the planting of the olive trees as well as the harvesting and milling of the olives. In its plant happens the refining, lab-testing and bottling.

"Each harvest and each pressing is dedicated to a different kind of olive oil," explained Claudio.

According to Coricelli, latitude, climate, the type of soil and the harvesting methods affect the quality of the olives, which in turn produce oil with different flavors and aromas.

Nowadays, farmers pick olives as early as possible because Pietro needs them for the extra virgin oil.

"From October to December in central Italy, you can obtain very good extra virgin oil. But if you leave the olives in the trees beyond those months, the olive becomes riper and the acidity increases," said Luca.

Pietro Coricelli grows its own olives but it doesn't grow enough to meet the volume of olive oil it supplies to the world so it sources olives from all over Italy.

The company tried importing olives from Spain but having to transport them did not yield good results. To solve that problem, Pietro Coricelli built a plant in Spain. All their extra-virgin olive oil, however, comes from Italy.

But what is extra virgin olive oil? It is the oil produced from the first pressing of the best olives; it is absolutely untouched by human hands. Extra virgin olive oil has absolutely no refined oil in it.

The less expensive olive oil, called pure olive oil, is a blend of refined olive oil and extra virgin olive oil or virgin olive oil.

Fly Ace is the importer and distributor in the Philippines of pedigreed bottles of extra virgin olive oil from Pietro Coricelli, such as the CondiExtra line, which consists a range of six different extra virgin oil.

Frantoio della Fattoria has the unique taste of unfiltered olive oil. Considered as natural olive juice, it is wonderful for salad or just drizzled over a slice of bruschetta. Il Classico is the top-selling olive oil in the world. Oliveto della Toree is made with olives that are not quite ripe and carefully selected from the best Italian groves. Fruity and delicate, it is good for fish dishes and soup. Frate Sale is made from organically grown olives, which means no fertilizers or pesticides. Novetto, which is fresh, unfiltered olive oil, is bottled and sold only from November until December.

Umbria DOP Colli Assisi-Spoleto is extra virgin olive oil with the DOP (Protected Designation of Origin) mark. This means the olives come from groves certified as protected and where unique types of olives produce oil famous the world over. Colli Assisi Spoleto is the oil using most highly prized olives harvested from the Spoleto hillsides. Its fruity flavor is good for country-style recipes.

And then there is CuociOliva, the olive oil created by Pietro Coricelli for cooking and frying.

"What we sell to our consumers is the tradition of good quality," said Claudio.

Health benefits

Archelei said Italian parents believed a tablespoon of olive oil a day would keep the doctor away and so it was not unusual for an Italian child to take a tablespoon of olive oil straight—no chasers.

According to a report published by Eurosciences Communication, the product helps prevent, among adults, heart disease, cancer, atherosclerosis and high cholesterol.

We got other important lessons from this trip to the Coricelli olive oil factory. One is that not all olives are the same and, consequently, there are many different kinds of olive oil.

Another is that you should not use olive oil for cooking unless it is specifically the variety made to cope with heat, like Cuoci Oliva.

One kind of olive oil is for drizzling and the other kind is for cooking and you have to take note of what you use because heating the kind that is meant for drizzling is not advisable.

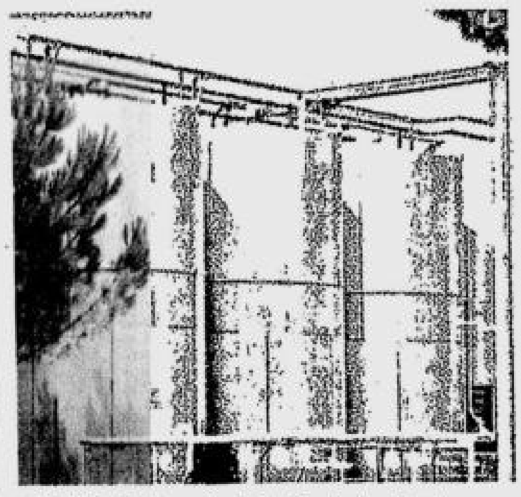
Like wine, a certain type of extra virgin olive oil is for fish, another type is for meat.

Oil is hardly ever good for the body but if any oil is good for your health, it's olive oil.

Lastly, we were told Italy would be hot in the summer but what we found out for ourselves was that it sizzled. Like oil.

MAESTRO. Taster of olive oil is an old hand.

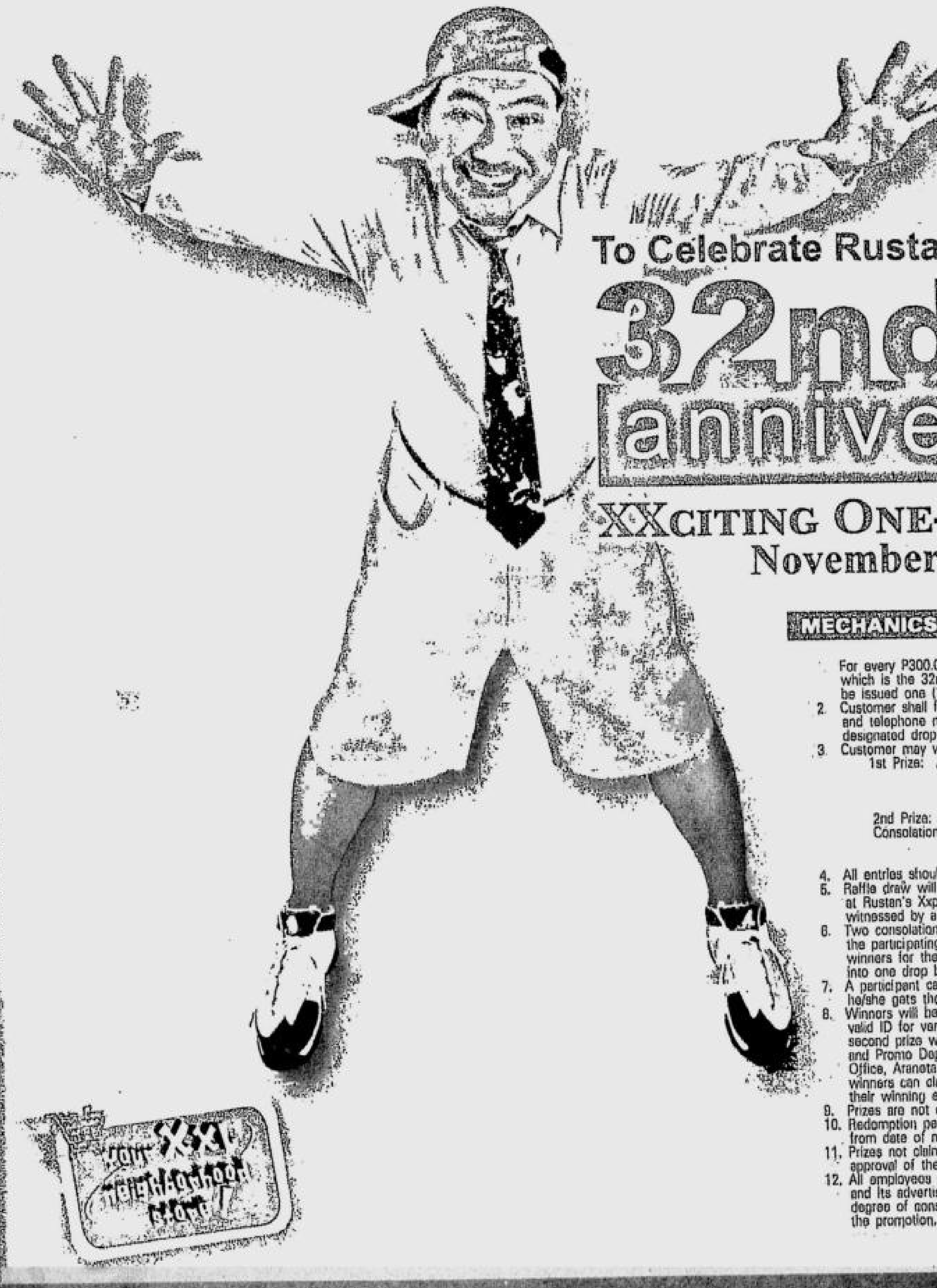
BOTTLING olive oil the cleanest possible way


TANKS of olive oil at the Spoleto plant

'The most difficult test for any extra virgin olive oil is the bread test'

pietro Coricelli
SPOLETO · ITALY
PARTNERS. Pietro Coricelli export manager Luca Archelei and Fly Ace CEO Jun Conchanco in lab gowns and caps plant visitors are made to wear

Xxpresslane
by Rustan SUPERMARKETS



To Celebrate Rustan Supermarkets'
32nd anniversary
XXCITING ONE-DAY RAFFLE!
November 29, 2002

MECHANICS:

1. For every P300.00 purchase in a single receipt on November 29, 2002, which is the 32nd Anniversary of Rustan Supermarkets, customer will be issued one (1) raffle coupon.
2. Customer shall fill out the raffle coupon with their name, address and telephone number and affix signature, then drop in the designated drop boxes where purchase was made.
3. Customer may win any of the following prizes:
   1st Prize: Appliance Showcase (La Germania Gas Stove, National Refrigerator, Moulinex Turbo Blender, Whirlpool Microwave Oven, National Washing Machine Laundry Twin).
   2nd Prize: P10,000.00 worth of RSI Gift Certificate
   Consolation Prizes: (1 per Xxpresslane outlet)
   14 Tamashi Boomboxes
   14 Tamashi Keyboards
4. All entries should be dropped on November 29, 2002 until closing hour.
5. Raffle draw will be held on December 6, 2002 at 3:00 p.m., at Rustan's Xxpresslane Star Mall, Mandaluyong City and will be witnessed by a DTI-NCR representative.
6. Two consolation prize will be drawn from each drop box of the participating 14 Xxpresslane outlets. After picking out the winners for the consolation prizes, entries will be consolidated into one drop box to draw the 2nd and 1st prize winners.
7. A participant can win only once. If he/she wins more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize.
8. Winners will be notified by registered mail and must present a valid ID for verification upon claiming their prizes. First and second prize winners must claim their prize at the Advertising and Promo Department of Rustan Supermarkets Inc. Head Office, Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City. Consolation prize winners can claim their prize at the branch where they dropped their winning entry.
9. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
10. Redemption period for the raffle prizes shall be within 60 days from date of notification.
11. Prizes not claimed within 60 days shall be forfeited with prior approval of the DTI-NCR.
12. All employees of Rustan Supermarkets, Rustan Xxpresslanes, and its advertising agency and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4830 Series 2002

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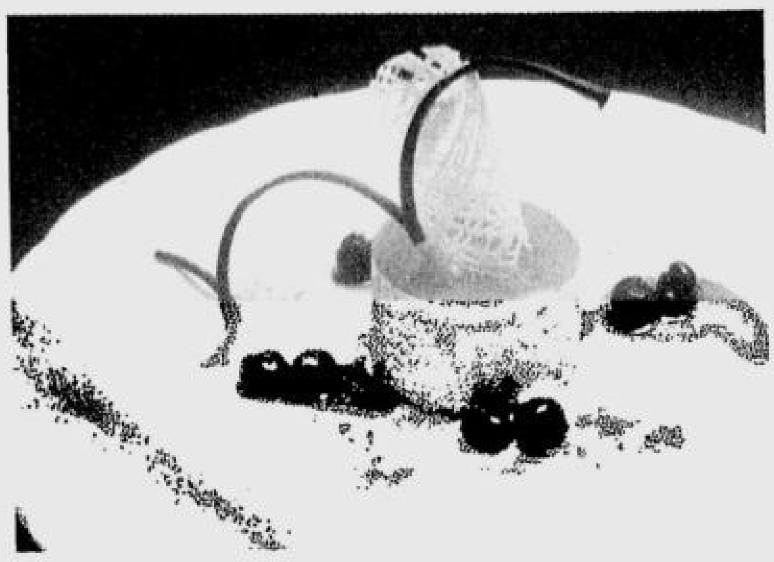
ROAST veal tenderloin with parsley linguini, sweet bread and artichoke fricasée

SMOKED foie gras, lobster and new potato salad hazelnut vinaigrette



STAR anise mousse with raspberry poached pear

The sovereign of champagne

By Vangie Baga-Reyes

The scion of the Deutz wine family of France was in Manila recently to spread the sparkle of champagne

AROUND this time of the year, there is only one wine that will serve you in any situation: champagne. Whether you are attending a formal sit-down dinner or a casual gathering, nothing is as delicious, as festive and as popular as a good bottle of bubbly wine. As they often say, there is no drink in the world that puts a bounce in your step and a sparkle in your eye like champagne.

The primary rule about champagne is that there is none. Provide and drink champagne whenever you get your hands on a good bottle.

But there's the rub. You need to choose a good bottle of champagne. Enter Champagne Duetz, which has been one of the most respected names in the sparkling wine business for over 160 years now.

Champagne Deutz (pronounced "doots," like toots) has long enjoyed a reputation for quality wine-making. Coming up with a delightful selection of champagne entails hard work, perseverance, skills and understanding of the science of winemaking. This we learned during a recent visit of Jean-Marc Lallier-Deutz, the fifth-generation owner and export manager of Champagne Deutz.

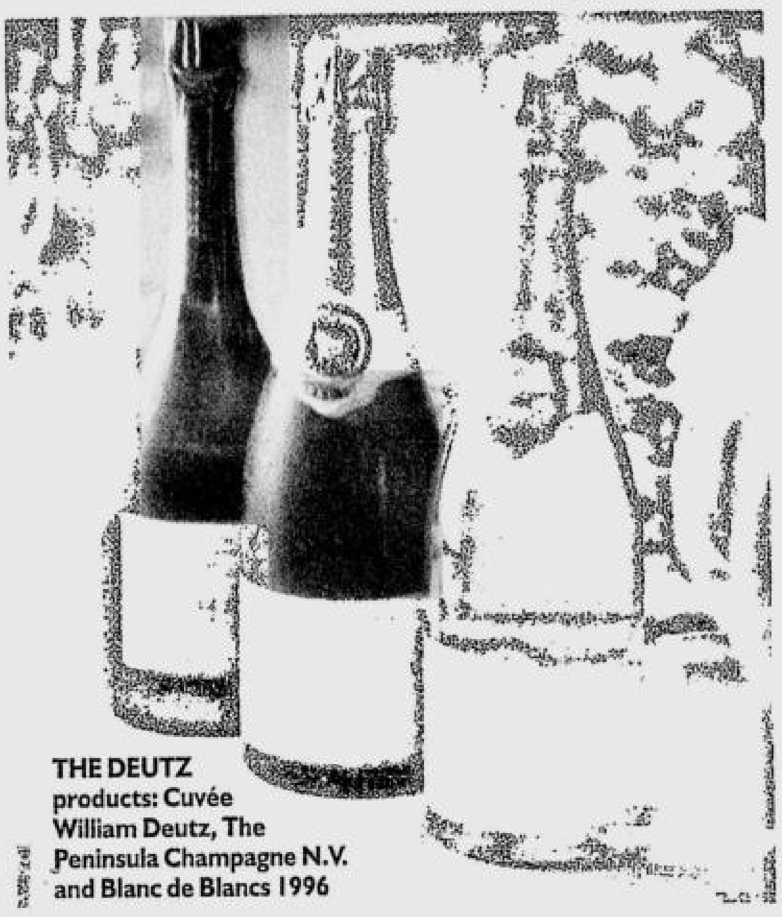
A respected wine-maker, Lallier-Deutz discussed every step of the wine-making process. From the effects of the altitude and temperature, to the macroelements of the soil, from the pruning methods to the types of grapes, to the ecological concerns of the company, Jean-Marc explained them all in clear, concise terms, in his usual thick French accent.

The most important aspect about producing wines of great excellence is "the total experience," Lallier-Deutz said. "Making good champagne requires more than good instincts. Choosing the wines from which it is blended is difficult, because the constituents have to be tasted young, when they are harsh and acidic. Knowing how they will develop and how well they will complement each other requires a lot of experience."

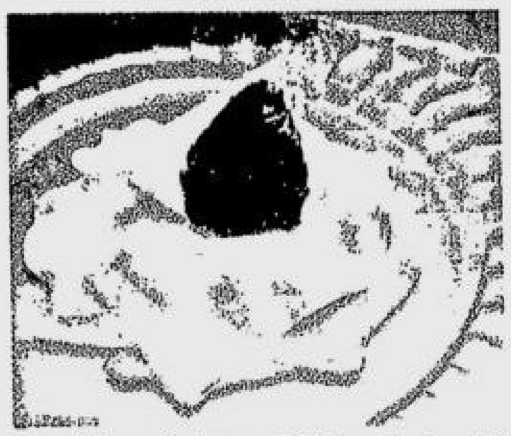
Champagne Deutz was founded in 1838 in Aÿ by William Deutz and Pierre-Hubert Geldermann. Since its inception, Champagne Deutz has been committed to the production of the finest handcrafted champagne. Its unerring attention to detail has produced champagne with richness, elegance and impeccable balance.

Deutz has been widely praised for having a good selection of sparking wines. For the record, Deutz champagnes have been consistent medal winners in various competitions. Deutz Brut Classic NV, for example, was

THE SOVEREIGN/ D5



THE DEUTZ products: Cuvée William Deutz, The Peninsula Champagne N.V. and Blanc de Blancs 1996



OPEN seafood ravioli with sea urchin foam

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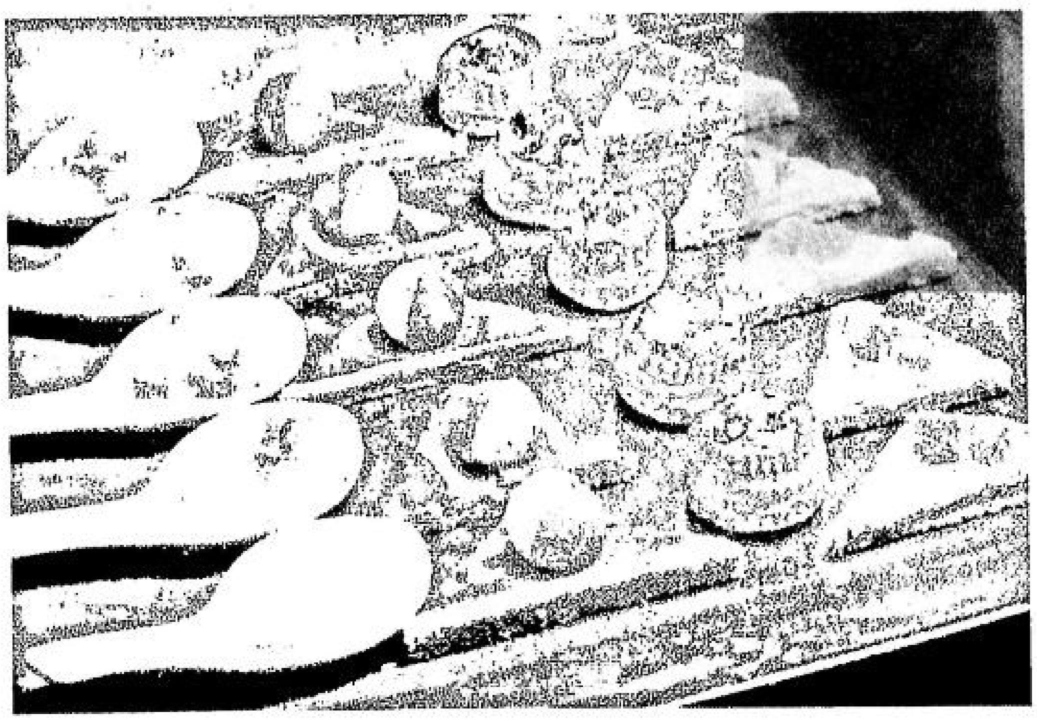
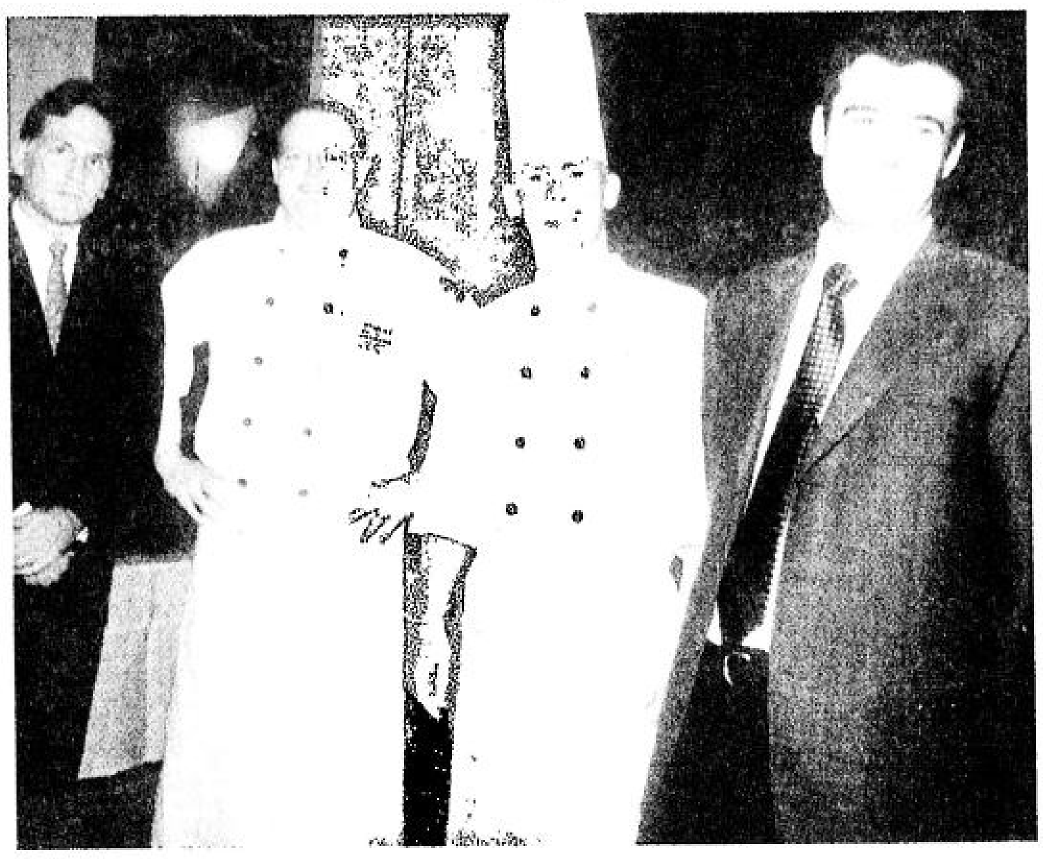


SERVE a glass of Cuvée William Deutz 1995 with your favorite hors d'oeuvres



JEAN-MARC Lallier-Deutz (extreme right), the fifth generation owner of Champagne Deutz, with The Peninsula Manila general manager David Batchelor, executive chef Gordon Landy and Old Manila chef de cuisine Nicolas de Visch

PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

The sovereign . . .

From page D4

awarded the gold during the International Wine Challenge (IWC) in 1999. "It's very appealing, with a citrus-tinged finish," said Lallier-Deutz about the award winner. Deutz Blanc de Blancs Vintage 1995 bagged the silver while Deutz Classic NV won the bronze in the IWC in 2001.

Exclusive Manila champagne

Lallier-Deutz's visit to Manila allowed him to check how his business in the Philippines had been doing. Definitely his champagne has been doing well at The Peninsula Manila, for which Deutz has exclusively produced a special champagne aptly called The Peninsula Champagne N.V. (non-vintage).

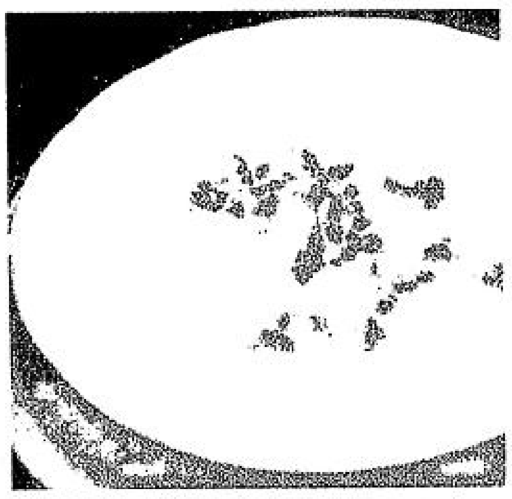
In an intimate dinner in the champagne maker's honor at the Old Manila, The Peninsula Manila laid out a sumptuous spread of French dishes that perfectly complemented Deutz products. The table was elegantly decked with red roses, white tablecloths and candelabras.

Executive Chef Gordon Landy prepared a smoked foie gras, lobster and potato salad with hazelnut vinaigrette and a creamy bouillon of coco beans scented with truffles and chanterelle mushrooms, accompanied by Blanc de Blancs 1996, which has a fresh, crisp, lemony taste and a light hint of butter.

The open seafood ravioli with sea urchin foam matched well with The Peninsula Champagne N.V., which is a bit sweet, yet smooth and refreshing.

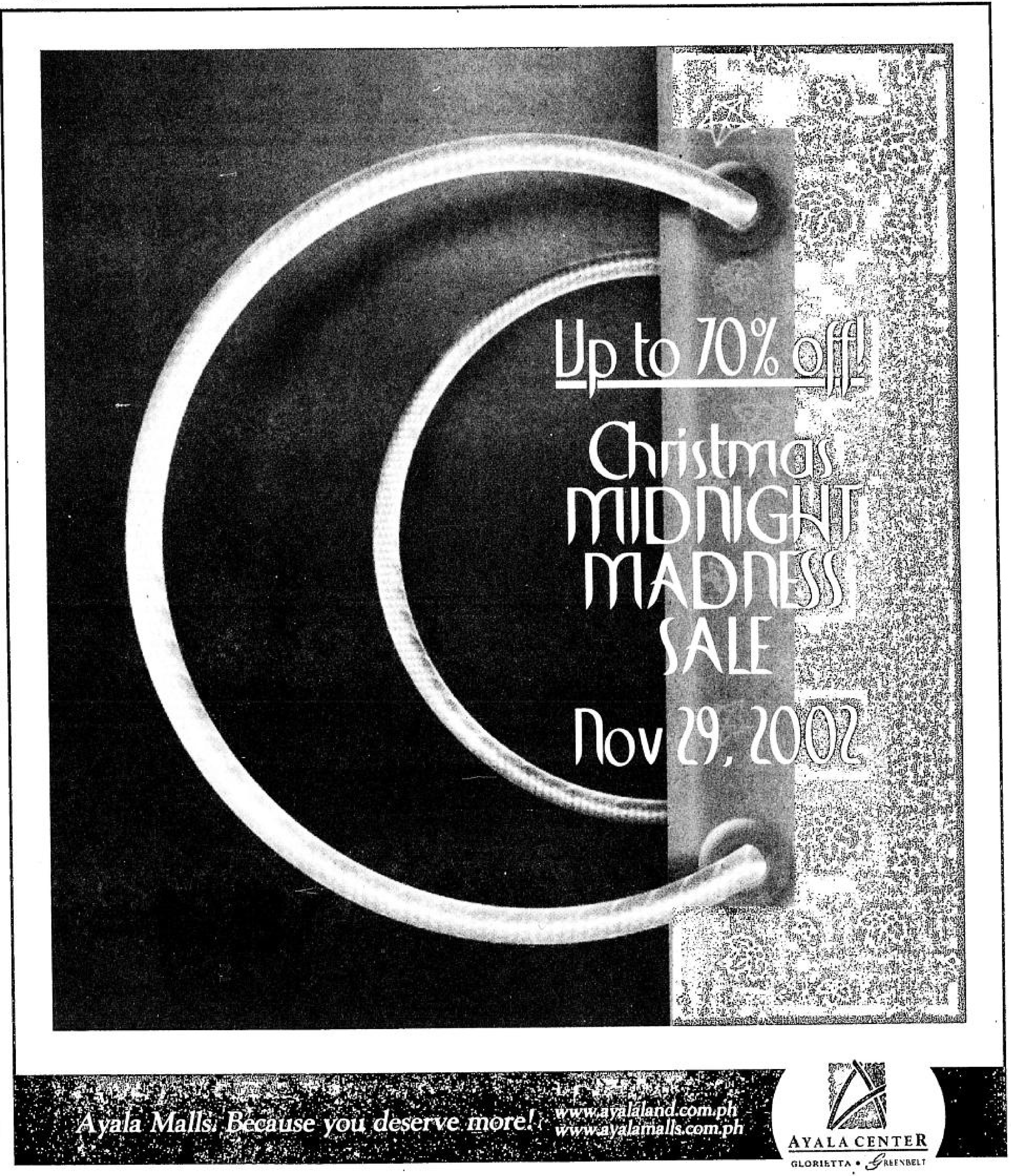
The Cuvee William Deutz 1995 tasted very well with the main meal of roast veal tenderloin with parsley linguini, sweet bread and artichoke fricassee. Cuvee William is subtle in taste, dry with fruity flavor and crisp finish. You can also serve this cuvee with your favorite hors d'oeuvres or enjoy it as an aperitif.

Inasmuch as champagne is the consummate celebratory wine, Deutz will always be the champagne of choice.



CREAMY bouillion of coco beans scented with truffles and chantrelle mushrooms

A FESTIVE, sumptous and food-friendly champagne comes from Deutz



EXTENDED
SALE
Nov 30 and Dec 1

Double Discount Plus points from participating stores from Nov 29 to Dec 1, 2002 (valid in Ayala Center Makati only).
Proceed to Glorietta or Greenbelt Discount Plus Card Booth to record points.

Free 1 movie ticket to midnight screening on Nov 29 & 30, 2002 for every purchase of 4 cinema tickets at the Glorietta 4 cinemas (midnight screening only except Guaranteed Seat Cinema).

Free concert on Nov 29, 2002 at Glorietta 4 Park, featuring Next Level at 7 pm, and Ogie Alcasid at 9 pm, sponsored by Mellow Touch.

Free ADIDAS baseball cap for every ₱2,000 single receipt purchase on Nov 29, 2002.

Free parking with any ₱1,000 single receipt purchase on Nov 29, 2002 (redeem coupon at Glorietta and Greenbelt Customer Service booths).

Get a chance to win ₱40,000 worth of gift certificates from Cinderella from Nov 29 - Dec 1, 2002 in the Midnight Madness Raffle Promo.

Free Coca Cola for every ₱100 single purchase receipt at the Food Choices of Glorietta and Greenbelt from 3 pm to 12 mn on Nov 29, 2002.

Check out the exciting offers of these hotels:
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Promo period from Nov 29 to Dec 1, 2002. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A-650, Series of 2002.

MIGUEL Ullibarri of Real Iberico demonstrates how to slice a ham properly.

The ham made from pigs in the Extremadura region of Spain is so good eating it is a blissful experience. Read on to find out why not all hams are created equal

CAVIAR OF HAM. Productos Ibericos de Bellota

The reign in Spain of the tender 'jamon'

By Cathy Babao Guballa

IT all begins with a pedigreed pig.

Jamon Iberico, the caviar of hams, is produced from the Iberian pig, the last remaining free-grazing breed in Europe. Making its home in the Extremadura region of Spain, it lives in the Mediterranean woodlands filled with evergreens and cork oaks in an ecosystem which the Spanish call *dehesa*. The dehesa, an important plant and wildlife reserve, is the habitat of this special breed of pigs. The acorn, which is the fruit of both the evergreen and cork oaks, is the basis for this pig's diet.

Smart hogs

According to Miguel Ullibarri of Real Iberico (Consorcio del Iberico), the agency which regulates and sets standards for Iberico ham, this pig is smarter than others.

"Somehow, it has developed the ability to crack open an acorn, spit out the shell and only savor its content," Ullibarri says. And it is quite a hefty pig despite its purely organic diet, which is the basis for the ham's incomparable tenderness and texture. The consortium also requires that identifying chips be placed on each pig so that one is able to trace back the ham's full history from birth to buyer.

Two stages

Iberian pigs yield a smaller amount of meat than other high-production breeds. They are raised in two stages.

In the first stage, the pigs are fed with grass, seeds, bulbs and grain until they reach a weight of approximately 80 to 115 kg. In the second stage, which is the fattening phase or the *montanera* process, the pigs feed on energy-filled acorns found beneath the trees. This phase reaches its peak between November and January. The pigs' search for acorns during this stage enables them to move about and exercise, which enhances development and adds a delicate aroma to the ham. During the *montanera* phase, the pigs must increase their weight, not to exceed an average of 180 kg, by the end of the process.

Two grades

Ullibarri explains that based on this diet-related criteria, Real Iberico has established two different grades for Iberian pork products: the pigs slaughtered immediately after the *montanera* phase are considered to be of the highest quality. The meat, quite succulent, has an exquisite aroma and texture.

According to Ullibarri, these products are known specifically as "Productos Ibericos de Bellota" (Acorn-fed Iberian pork products). On the other hand, those pigs whose diet after the acorn season is supplemented with selected feed and grain complement until reaching the required weight are known as "Productos Ibericos" (Iberian Pork Products).

HAM ABOVE ALL ELSE. Curing the *jamon* in the cellar.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF REAL IBERICO

TENDER AND SUCCULENT. A serving of Jamon Iberico.

Curing process

It is the lengthy curing process that sets the Iberian ham apart from all others. This process begins by salting the cuts where the customary amount of time is one day in salt per kilogram in weight. Subsequently, curing takes place in drying sheds that are located in specific villages of south-western Spain, 700 meters above sea level.

The final, slow process of maturing or aging takes place in the semi-darkness of cellars. Real Iberico has set minimum times for each stage according to the weight of the pieces. The minimum time for aging is 12 months for shoulder-ham and 15 months for ham, but can be longer than 24 months in the case of hams of greater weight.

In addition, because of a diet predominantly consisting of acorns, 50-60 percent of its total fat content comes in the form of oleic acid, the same monounsaturated fatty acid found in olive oil, which is known to reduce bad cholesterol and maintaining or improving good cholesterol levels.

For the fortunate

Spain, the world's No. 1 producer of ham worldwide, has a per capita consumption of five kilos of ham per person per year. Camilo Jose Cela, Spain's winner of the Nobel Prize for literature and a fan of Jamon Iberico, has described it as "a morsel to be savored by the fortunate."

Jamon Iberico's shape is slender and elongated, the meat delicate and fragrant, with a shiny appearance ranging from pink to purple-red in color. It is subtly veined with fat, which gives it both marbly effect and very smooth texture. It literally melts in your mouth.

Ullibarri says that to fully appreciate it, the ham must be cut into very thin, almost transparent slices, with some of the fat left on and served at room temperature of 23 to 25 degrees Centigrade. He adds that it is best eaten in small bites.

He relates that there are several misconceptions about Jamon Iberico, even among his countrymen. First, Jamon Serrano is a totally different ham from Iberico. "Serrano refers to cured ham that comes from white pig breeds," he says. Neither is it Jamon de Pata Negra because not all Iberian pigs have black hoofs. Lastly, and the most common, is that it is often referred to as Jamon de Jabugo. "Jabugo is, in reality, a village in Huelva where the Jamon Iberico ham is also produced," he explains.

Ullibarri stresses that consumers should always look for the dark green band with the logo Real Iberico on each leg of ham. The product should also carry the identification mark of the individual manufacturer.

Blissful

Now gaining world-wide prominence, Ullibarri says even the Japanese are starting to rave about the qualities of this ham. They are currently the biggest market for Jamon Iberico in Asia. Not surprisingly, eating this gourmet delicacy has been defined in the food and wine magazine Spain Gourmetour as a blissful experience. Even Miss Piggy would agree.

Beginning Dec. 5, the Spanish Commercial office (ICEX) in Manila hosts a week-long Jamon Iberico festival at Terry Selection, La Tienda, Casa Armas, Don Alba's and Gaudi restaurant.

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Real Ibérico

www.realiberico.com

IBERIAN pigs search for acorns in the *dehesa*.

Archive of fine vintage

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guests to dress to the nines and cough up absurd membership fees.

And, believe it or not, guests need not call in advance to make reservations. Of course, members of the Wine Club and Clearwater Country Club, two attractions developed and operated by Yats International at the Mimosa, will enjoy special discounts. The place will be open Monday to Friday, 5-11 p.m., starting December.

"Everybody is welcome as long as there's available space," says Wang. "Of course, we'd appreciate it if they call us first to give us enough time to chill and decant the wine. One of the worse things that could spoil even the finest wines are unsettled tannins or sediments."

It seems not even the hard times could dampen Wang's spirits. After all, he says, the Philippines has no exclusive franchise on economic stagnation. "The whole world is going through tough times. It's simply a matter of adjusting the formula by giving consumers more choices based on prevailing economic conditions."

The Wine Library, for instance, offers guests with three types of menus: one for wines priced below P6,000 per bottle; one for wines priced up to P12,000 per bottle; and one for those that go beyond P12,000 per bottle.

"Good times promote complacency among consumers," says Wang, "while hard times make them more discerning and demanding. Eventually, some products would have to be weeded out." But not its collection of hardbound books. The place, after all, is a library, remember? Don't expect the hottest bestsellers, however, to grace its shelves anytime soon—only books about wine and the growing lifestyle it has spawned.

For inquiries, call 635-5395.

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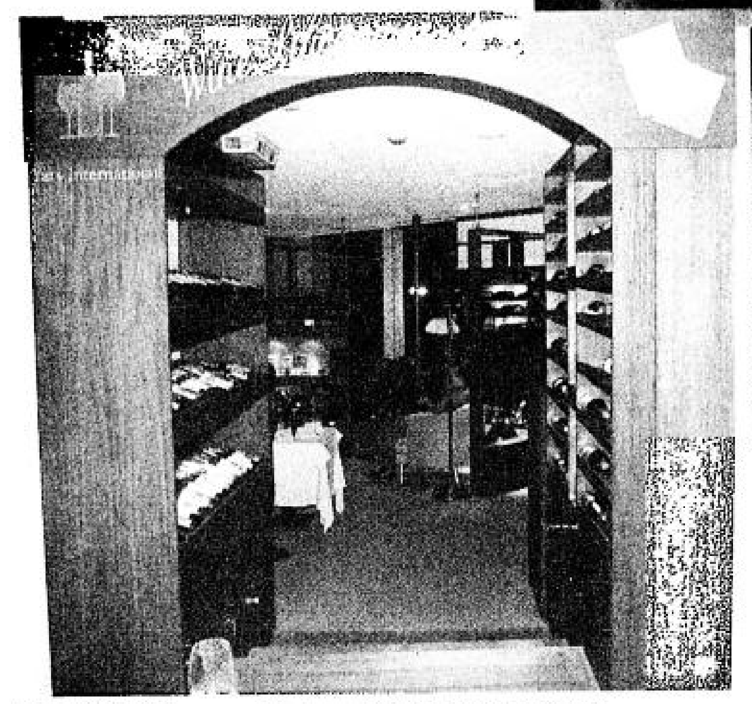
A PORTION of the Wine library's 15, 000- bottle wine collection.



THE WINE Library and Lounge sits in a corner of Aqua.

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REMY Martin introduces the best of X.O.—Remy Martin X.O. Excellence. The new product was recently launched via an exclusive party series. Remy Martin X.O. Excellence is a blend of 85 percent Grande Champagne and 15 percent Petite Champagne. Remy Martin X.O. Excellence, available in 70 cl.

New wines keep your spirits high

THIS November and December, Richmonde Hotel's featured wines will keep your body warm and spirits high! Wines from Chile take center stage with their unique taste and flavorful aroma. The brilliant ruby red hue, medium body, fine structure, pleasant toast and intense bouquet of mature red fruits seasoned with vanilla extracts make Vina Sta. Rita Cabernet Sauvignon truly worth experiencing. Vina Sta. Rita Sauvignon Blanc brings to white-wine drinkers the fruity taste and fragrance of apples, peaches and pears.

Both wines are priced at P220+ per glass and Pl,075+ per bottle. Available at the Richmonde Grill and the Exchange Bar, 2/L, The Richmonde Hotel, 21 San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 638-7777 local 3409 or 3408.

New menu for airline's first-class passengers

SINGAPORE Airlines has recently introduced a new menu for its Book the Cook service.

Book the Cook is an exclusive advance in-flight meal ordering service which allows passengers to pre-select the dish of their choice from specially designed menus. This includes appetizing dishes that were created with the help of SIA's International Culinary Panel.

An array of new menu delights include Japanese and Thai dishes such as *kyokaiseki* and Thai green curry fish balls stuffed with prawns. These choices are available on all first-class flights departing from Singapore. In addition, SIA offers a wide selection of Singaporean and Western specialties such as Chicken Curry Peranakan Style and Chicken Rice, Lobster Thermidor, 8 oz US Rib Eye Steak, Roast Rack of Lamb and Seared Salmon Escalope.

First-class passengers departing from Singapore have a choice of 21 dishes, while Raffles Class passengers have a selection of 17 dishes.

Book the Cook meals are available on all flights out of Singapore (except on flights to Kuala Lumpur and Penang) and from Amsterdam, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Kaoshiung, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, New York, Newark, San Francisco, Sydney, Taipei and Tokyo.

Orders can be placed online at www.singaporeair.com. Call 810-4951 to 59 (Manila), (032) 232-6211 (Cebu), (082) 233-0548 (Davao).

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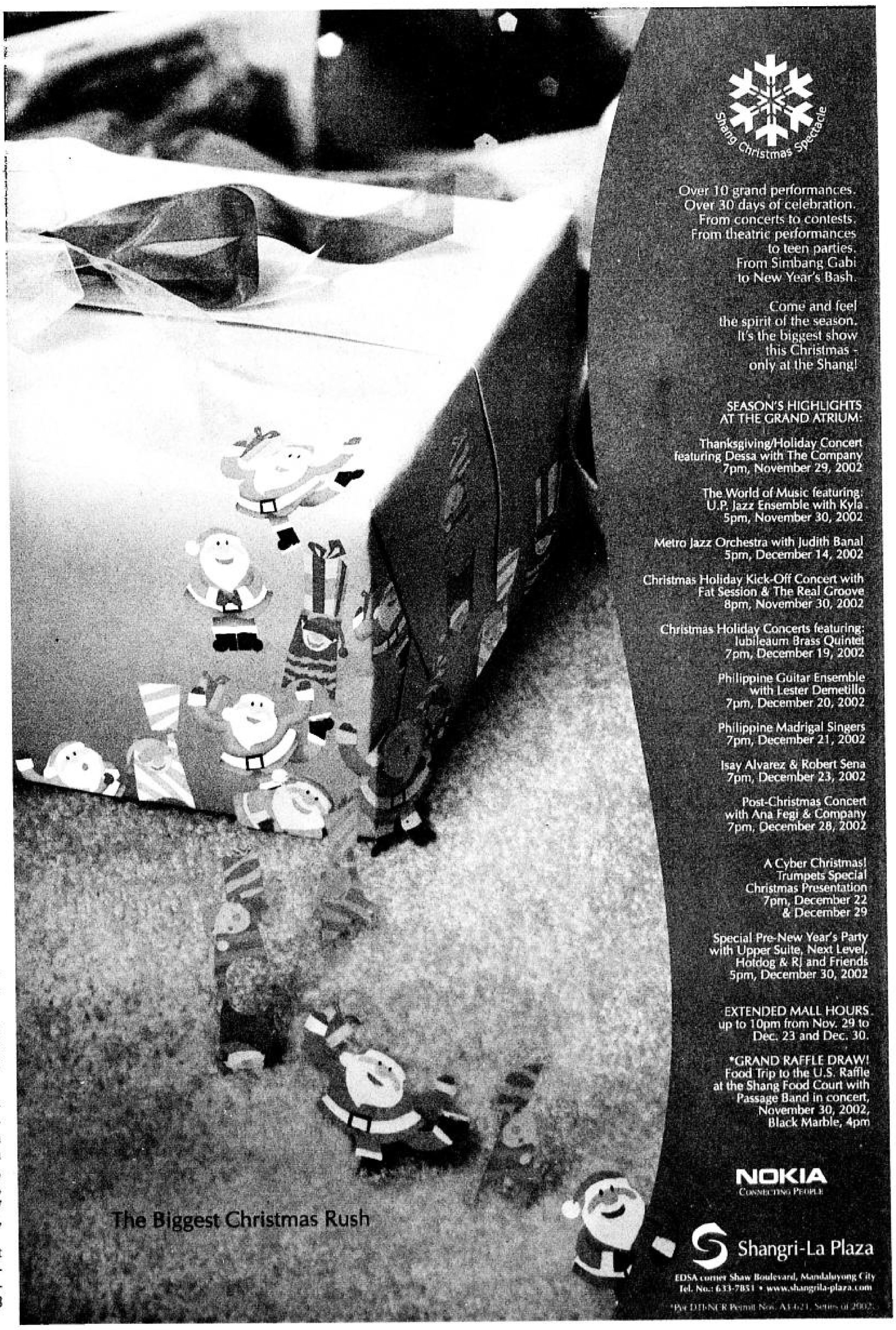

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Philippine Madrigal Singers 7pm, December 21, 2002
Isay Alvarez & Robert Sena 7pm, December 23, 2002
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A Cyber Christmas! Trumpets Special Christmas Presentation 7pm, December 22 & December 29
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Archive of fine vintage

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Betoy Johnson

WINE lovers need not go far to savor the full essence and flavor that are the hallmarks of premium and mature wines. In response to Metro Manila's burgeoning "wine lifestyle," the people behind Yats International Wine Club at the Mimosa in Pampanga have come up with a more accessible venue called the Wine Library, a new and separate entity right in the heart of the country's premier business district.

Carved from a portion of the famed Aqua restaurant on the mezzanine level of the Enterprise Bldg in Makati, the Wine Library exudes exclusivity as it boasts of a 1,500-bottle cellar that houses vintage red wines from Bordeux and other celebrated wine regions. There's hardly a vintage younger than 1990 in the Bordeux category. For red and white Burgundy, hardly a bottle is said to be younger than 1995, with plenty of fine vintages from the '60s, '70s and '80s. Vintage champagne, port and full-bodied sweet wines from Sauternes and Loire complete the extensive wine list.

"It's certainly not as big as the 15,000-bottle wine cellar we have at Yats," says Denny Wang, director of Yats International. "But we hope to address what wine aficionados find missing in the market today. They have had it with wine that's not yet ready to drink. Wine, for one, needs to be aged adequately for it to shed its bitterness. That's why we only serve mature wines."

Aging well

Wang likens wine to food. The longer you marinate, say, meat, the better and more complex its taste becomes. "Wines need a long time to age for it to develop the right complexity," he says.

Wine is both a scholarship and a way of life at the Wine Library

EXPENSIVE vintages (from left), Chateau Cos D's Estornel, 1949, Chateau Lync-Bages, 1961, Chateau D' Yquiem, 1963, and Chateau Margaux, 1934

DENNY Wang, director of the Yats Club International, welcomes guests at the Wine Library.

Actually, the concept behind the Wine Library is no longer new. In fact, it dates back centuries ago when men of stature started retiring to the library after dinner not just to read books, but to ink business deals or discuss raging issues of the day, of course, over a good bottle of wine and a box of fine cigars.

Modern-day movers and shakers can still do that in comfort and style at the Wine Library. The place features six cozy spaces, with varying sitting capacities and equipped with all sorts of amenities—from a wide range of expensive glasses to individual panels that allow guests to control light intensity and music volume. Patrons can do away with piped-in music in favor of their own MP3s. Or they can swap stories all night long over bottles of their preferred French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish or American vintages.

Glass partitions establish a semblance of privacy without isolating a particular group from the rest of humanity. "It's like a sandbox for wine lovers that offers some privacy within a friendly and relaxed atmosphere," says Wang.

For the workaholic executive out to mix business with pleasure, each table is equipped with an Internet-ready phone outlet. They don't have to miss an episode of their favorite lifestyle or sporting event as well. Yes, even the latest episode of "Sex and the City." Cable-ready flat TVs are available upon request.

Small servings

Although the Wine Library isn't packaging itself as a place to savor full-course meals, good food will be provided by Aqua through a separate menu.

But who wants to spoil an exquisite glass of expensive wine? That's why food servings are decidedly smaller and less complicated so as not to overpower or clash with such celebrated and expensive vintages as, say, Chateau Lynch-Bages, 1961 (P78,000 per bottle) or Chateau Cos d' Estornel, 1949 (P48,800 per bottle).

"Serving sizes are shrunk down by 30 to 40 percent and prepared in such a way that they complement the wines," says Wang.

Not every item on its extensive wine list comes with a five-digit price tag. Nor is the Wine Library an exclusive club that requires

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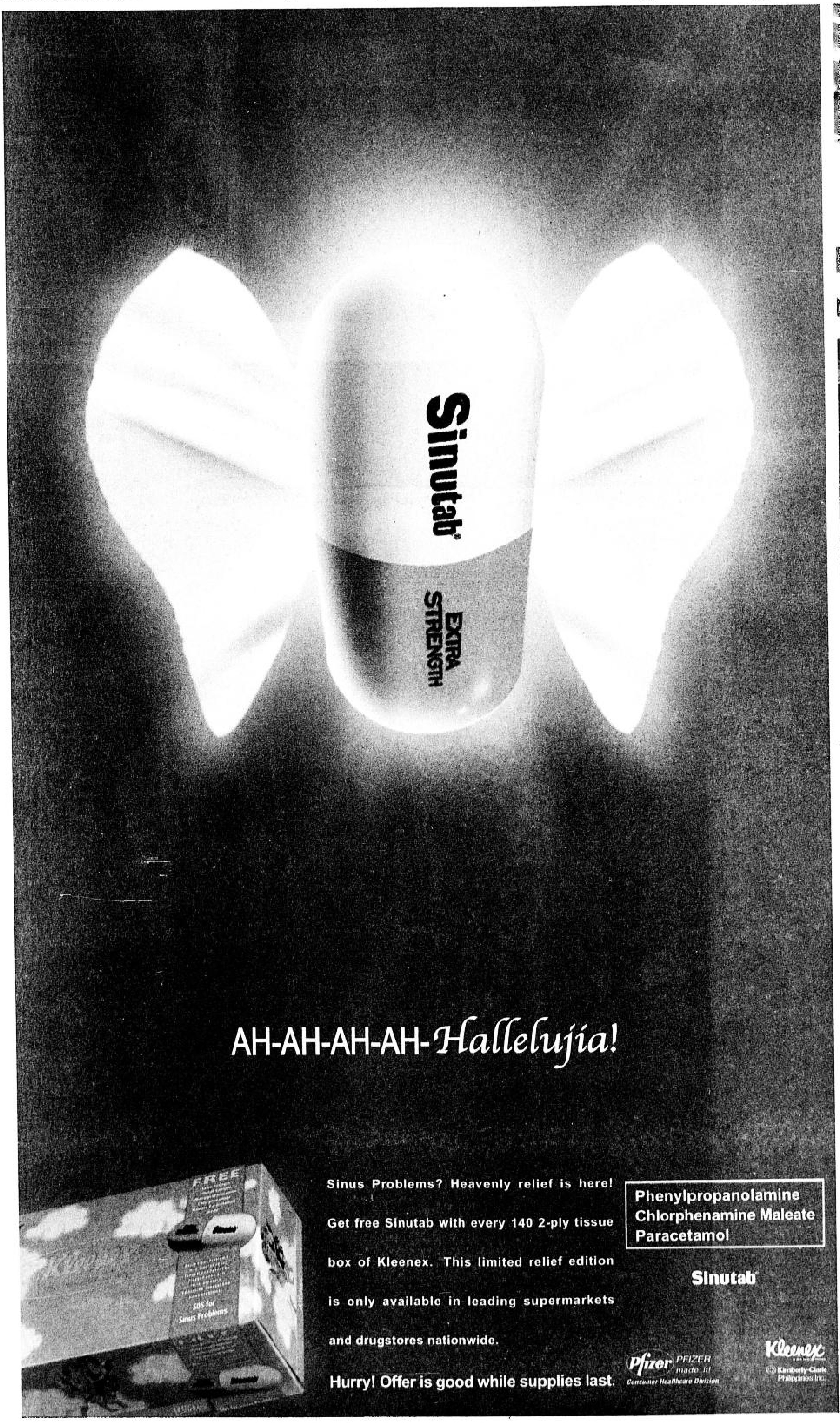

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